

**Usefulness of “*Common Sense and General Awareness*”
in understanding some key features of the Rigvedic Hymns**

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Background:

From the mid-nineteenth century onward, we find that several western researchers cum writers who first studied **Sanskrit** language and then tried to present **Rigved** in a different manner by translating the Indian origin ancient literature in various European languages that was originally composed in an archaic **Sanskrit** language. But their interpretations of the Rigvedic Texts are totally away from the views of most of the **Traditional Believers** or the **Ritualists** who mostly belong to the **Priestly Community of India**.

After the discovery of **Harappan Civilization** (also known as **Indus Valley Civilization**), in the last 100 years, Vedic Scholars from different walk of life have been constantly arguing about some key words like **Arya, Asva, Soma, Yajna** etc. and the origin of language used by the **Rigvedic Poets**. This has divided many **Indologists, Linguists, Historians** and **Archaeologists** into two groups; One Class of the people believes that the **Aryans** who composed praise songs were originally from **Eurasian Steppes** who landed in the North-west corner of the **Indian Sub-continent** from ancient **Persia** (present-day **Iran**), hence they are commonly known as the advocates of **Aryans Migration Theory (AMT)**. But instead of narrating "**Pure Vedic Stories**", the **AMT backers** tend to fuse Myths, Material and Social Cultural aspects highlighted in the Vedic texts with the documents, inscriptions and/or ancient remains excavated in other parts of the world; strongly claim to have traced origin of the **Archaic Sanskrit** language using **Comparative Linguistics**; forcefully state to have correctly located some Geographical Features described in **Rigved** such as river **Saraswati** and river **Rasa** outside the **Indian Sub-continent** and recently started asserting to have clearly identified the ancestry of the **Rigvedic People** in **Eurasian Steppes** on the basis of **Advance Genetic Science**.

However, persons belonging to Second Category often express that the People who composed the Poems in archaic **Sanskrit** language were the **native of India** and therefore, they are termed as the supporters of the **Indigenous Aryans Theory**. Of course, in the free world, every person is entitled to have his/her own view on any subject including **Rigved**.

Though many **Vedic Scholars** have great knowledge of the archaic **Sanskrit** language used by the Poets but most have become mentally rigid as they refuse to appreciate another person's viewpoints only because that happens to be different from their views.

Hence it is an imperative need to study **Rigved** from different perspective so as to bring out what was going on in the minds of the Rigvedic Poets. Following examples would provide some idea about the application of **Non-academic** but **Common Man Approach**.

Eternal Love for Indra, Yajna and Saraswati

As a case Study, here we are going to discuss in brief about the three most popular characters of **Rigved**, namely, **Indra**, **Yajna** and river **Saraswati** that would make the reader aware of **unfading belief** of the generations of **Rigvedic Priests** throughout the period of the composition of **All Ten Mandalas of Rigved** in these **Divine Entities** [1].

Indra

Indra is the Supreme God of Rigvedic Priests but was created after the arrival of mythical demon **Vritra** who is believed to have taken water of the **Vedic territory** in **his** captivity. In **Ten Mandalas of Rigved**, there are more than 260 hymns dedicated to **Indra** who happens to be the **real Warrior and Storm God** of the **Rigvedic People**. Two consecutive verses of **Mandala-8 (Rv-8.89,5 and Rv-8.89,6)** give proper sequence of the three major events that occurred during **pre-Rigvedic** period.

1. Appearance of **Vritra** (real drought) in the **Sapta-Sindhu** region.
2. Fashioning of **Indra/Maghavana** to counter or nullify effect of **Vritra**.
3. Formulation of **Yajna** ritual to praise the **Deities of Imagination** by reciting songs.

As per the Early Vedic Philosophy, prior to fashioning of **Indra**, **Seven Adityas** were involved in controlling and monitoring the all activities of the world.

The Poet of **Mandala-4** has narrated story of birth of mythical god **Indra** as a very unusual thing as **his** mother (Earth) bore **him** for thousand months and autumns and came out of the mother's womb from the side (see verse **Rv-4.18,4** first and then verse **Rv-4.18,2**).

The Poet through the verse **Rv-4.18,5** tells us that immediately after birth, **Indra** filled both parts of world (*rodasi- Heaven and Earth*). As **Indra** was born to kill **Vritra**, he

enormously grew in size, almost hit the **Heaven, his father**. Therefore, in the verse **Rv-4.18,12** the Singer says that as soon as **Indra** was born, he was about to make his mother widow/ *mātaraṃ vidhavām* (with increase in size, **Indra** had almost smashed the Heaven). Subsequently, **Indra** went to **Tvastar**'s house and drank **Soma** (see **Rv-4.18,3**); then alone killed **many Vritras** (refer to **Rv-4.17,19**) who till that time had no opponent in the world.

After re-arranging some verses of the hymns **Rv-4.17** and **18** for better interpretation, it can be said that once **Sapta-Sindhu** region was reeling under a long duration drought that is manifested by killing of **several Vritras** by **Indra** immediately after birth as if **Indra** has cleared backlog of many years. In reality, **Indra** was shaped after many brain-storming sessions held for several days by the **Old Rishis**. In other words, **pre-Rigvedic Rishis** sat together to conceive a new but mentally aggressive (*manyu*) god **Indra** and purposely equipped **him** with deadly weapon **Vajra/thunderbolt** to take on an imaginary demon **Vritra**. Verse **Rv-4.18,3** also indicates that since **pre-Indra** period, **Soma** drink was known to the people who lived in that locality. Additionally, verse **Rv-4.18,11** informs us that when **Indra** was created, then **Old Gods** became unhappy, it indirectly means some people who had faith in **Earlier Gods** or **Adityas** did not accept **him** as their **Supreme Deity**. Moreover, after birth, **Indra** declared god **Vishnu** as his friend. It implies that prior to induction of new god **Indra** in Vedic philosophy, god **Vishnu** and **Tvastar** (who provided **Soma** to **new born Indra**) were already present.

But since inception, new born **Indra** had a tough going as there were some people who strongly opposed his presence. **Table-1** provides information in brief on these aspects.

Table-1

Verse Number	Description about Indra	Remarks
Rv-4.24,9	After birth, Indra was put “for sale”	In early days, there were no takers for “new born” Indra .
Rv-8.1,5	Here Indra became “not for sale” as the rivals started lauding <i>him</i> .	After the victory in the War of Ten Kings , Indra got recognition from many.
Rv-8.96,16	Indra became rival of “seven”	Seven Adityas existed prior to Indra disliked the latter as he got priority.
Rv-8.100,3	Who has seen Indra? If Indra does not exist, then whom shall we worship?	Some known people raised doubts about presence of Indra in the world when the Priests/Poets lived to west of river Sindhu where no there was water scarcity.

It means to say that, in the beginning, **Indra** was not acceptable to some people belonging to the **pre-Rigvedic Arya community** who were most likely from the ruling class (king **Nahusha**) of that time. In addition to this, during the period of **Mandala-8**, **Indra** was targeted by some known people that are indicated by the Poet using the phrase *anāyudhāso asurā adevā* or **Weapon-less Asuras** in the verse **Rv-8.96,9** who were **Godless/non-believer of Indra** too. On both occasions, Vedic community or the **Aryas** got divided into two factions, one who immensely loved **Indra** kept worshipping *him* and another set of people totally refused to accept **Indra** as God and hence wholly discarded *him* (became **An-Indra**).

From the above, it is crystal clear that the hard-core Priests felt to have won the “**War of the Words**” against their opponents using the best possible word-power and were successful in retaining God **Indra** as the **Supreme Deity** in the **Vedic Philosophy**.

In other words, “**No Indra means No Yajna in Rigvedic Community**”.

Yajna

Yajna was the most important ritual of the Rigvedic People around which several generations of the Priestly Community spent their whole life. It was an up-gradation of the earlier **Simple Agni Worship**. If **Yajna** rite is taken out from **Rigved**, then the texts would not have any value. Same thing has been explained in the form of equation given below.

$$\text{Rigved} - \text{Yajna} = 0$$

During the **Bronze Age** period, many settled tribes respected **Agni** as God. In many verses of **Rigved**, different Poets have termed **Agni** as **Griha-pati/Master of the house**. This is because in those days, in every house, food was cooked using firewood. As fire provides both **heat** and **light** and hence it was the most sought after thing in every house.

The Poet of **Mandala-2** (the **Earliest Mandala of Rigved**) in the very first verse has described creation of **Agni** in the world in three ways,

Rv-2.1,1: Thou, **Agni**, shining in thy glory through the days, art brought to life from out the waters,
from the stone:

From out the forest trees and herbs that grow on ground, thou, Sovran Lord of men art
generated pure.

1. Due to friction or rubbing action of one stone over another;
2. From Waters as god Savitar or Surya is believed to rise from sea/ocean;
3. Wildfires which occur in Forests.

But the “**Agni of Yajna**” is different from the normal household **Agni** and has its origin in the wildfires that occur naturally in thick forests. As per the descriptions available in the texts, after creation of God **Indra**, the **pre-Rigvedic Rishis** got an idea of **Yajna** from the wildfires. The **Mandala-3** Poet in the verse **Rv-3.9,5** has made it clear that **Matarisvan** (means **wind**) brought **Agni of Yajna** to them [1, Griffith Translation].

Rv-3.9,5: Him wandering at his own free will, **Agni** here hidden from our view,

Him **Matarisvan** brought to us from far away produced by friction, from the Gods.

Following verses would make the things further clear [1].

Rv-3.5,8: Born suddenly, by plants he grew to greatness, when tender shoots with **holy oil increased** (**Ghrita**) him,

Like waters lovely when they hasten downward may **Agni** in his Parents' lap protect us.

Rv-3,5,10: Best of all luminaries lofty **Agni** supported with his flame the height of heaven,

When, far from **Bhrugus**, **Matarisvan** kindled the oblation-bearer where he lay in secret.

Rv-10;46,9: That **Agni**, him whom **Heaven and Earth engendered**, the Waters. Tvastar, and with might, the **Bhrugus**,

Him **Matarisvan** and **the Gods** have fashioned holy for man and first to be entreated.

Rv-10;46,10: **Agni**, whom Gods have made oblation bearer, and much-desiring men regard as holy, Give life to him who lauds thee when he worships, and then shall glorious men in troops adore thee.

The ancestors of Rigvedic Priests believed that a wildfire is an act of angered Gods wherein as a part of punishment along with plants and vegetation, many animals, birds and a few number of human beings too get killed. Therefore, the ancient Rishis decided to replicate a large scale wildfire into small scale **Yajna** worship and made **Agni of Yajna** as an oblation bearer who would act as a mediator between the Gods and the People. To pacify the aggravated Gods, they included **Soma** and **Animal Sacrifice** as a part of **Yajna** rite so that **Agni of Yajna** would first taste the sacrifice on behalf the Deities of their Imagination and also take the

oblation to them. It seems that ancient **Bhrugus** played a key role by popularising **Simple Agni Worship** earlier to its up-gradation to **Yajna** rite. Also the idea of inviting Several Gods at the time of **Yajna** came from **Atharva** who belonged to **Bhrugu** clan (see verse **Rv-10.92,10**). Since inception, animal sacrifice was an integral part of **Yajna**.

Probably **Bharati**, *nri-patni*, wife of a king (**Yayati**?) first suggested praising the Gods on the occasion of **Yajna**. Therefore, in **Rigved** she is often called as *Hotra Bharati*.

- As per the verse **Rv-2.34,12** **Dasagvas** (from **Angirasa** Clan) performed first **Yajna**.
- As per the verse **Rv-1.96,2**; ancient **Ayu** composed the first **Song of Praise** on behalf of **Manu** (mythical ancestor (?) of the ancient Rishis and the Rigvedic Priests).
- As per the verse **Rv-10.80,7**; the **Ribhus** using their wisdom first time composed a special prayer for **Agni**.
- **Ribhus** made available more quantity of **Soma** juice for **Yajna** (see **Rv-4.33 to 37**).
- **Ribhus** mentally fashioned **Ratha** for **Asvins** and **Hari**/two tawny steeds for **Indra** especially to bring them to the site of **Yajna** (see verses **Rv-1,20,2** and **3**). They also made available more **Asvas** from **Asvas** for other Deities too (see verse **Rv-1.161,7**).
- As per the verse **Rv-10.63,1**; a special **Yajna** was conducted for **Yayati** who was the son of king **Nahusha**. Probably **Yayati** could be the first Noble Person and a special invitee who attended **Yajna** ritual prior to start of **Rigvedic Compositions**.
- The verse **Rv-2.7,5** informs us that **Bharata** who was the leader of warrior tribe, personally present at the time of **Yajna** and gifted animals like bulls, barren cows and a pregnant cow to the Priests. This could be the earliest **Dana-stuti Yajna** performed for a king.

In this way, with the active participation from many ancient **Rishis**, formally **Yajna** ritual came into existence. Development of a proper **Yajna** procedure definitely involved thoughtful experimental works and hence must have taken a very long time.

Since **Yajna** ritual was the brain-child of the ancestors of the Rigvedic Priests, on regular basis, it provided a platform for the new generations of the Priests, first to learn from their seniors about the finer details of the rite and then earn the livelihood from the same. It also provided an opportunity to the **Aryas** (includes all those who spoke Archaic **Sanskrit** Language) to compose new praise songs to show their inherent skills as the **Visionary Poets**.

River Saraswati

It is very strange thing to know that Rigvedic Poets who were the knowledge oriented people of their time had an emotional attachment to a geographical feature for several generations and that feature is nothing but **Rigvedic River Saraswati**. One Poet has gone to the extent that in the composed verse **Rv-2.41,16** he called the river as *-ámbitame nádītame dévitame sárasvati* / the best **Mother**, the best **River**, and the best **Goddess**. This makes river **Saraswati** as the very special character of the documents. This relationship did not develop during the *Rigvedic Period* alone but had past history as described in the following verses [1].

Rv-2.41,16: Best Mother, best of Rivers, best of Goddesses, Saraswati,

We are, as twere of no repute and dear Mother, give thou us renown.

Rv-2.41,17: In thee, Saraswati, divine, all generations have their stay.

Be, glad with Sunahotra's sons: O Goddess grant us progeny.

Through the verse **Rv-2.41,17** the Poet has expressed his desire to continue his association with river **Saraswati** and also pointed out that since many generations, the **People of Priestly Community** have been living on **her** banks and hence appealed **her** to give him offspring. This verse informs us that the Poet desperately wants progeny to maintain continuity in the age-old relationship between river **Saraswati** and his **family**. It also implies that several earlier generations of the Priests were born and brought up on her banks and hence the Composer wishes to live in her company.

With the exception of **Mandala-4**, the word **Saraswati** is found in all other Mandalas. The said word appears more than 70 times in **Rigved**. Additionally, there are three hymns exclusively addressed to river **Saraswati** those belong to **two** of the **Five Early Mandalas**.

But the story does not end here as in the verse either 8 or 9 of the **Ten Apris Hymns** of **Rigved**, along with **Ila** and **Bharati**; **Saraswati** has also been glorified as a member of the group of three Goddesses. It means to say that whether alone or in company of other feminine entities, river **Saraswati** has been identified as the **Divine Being** since **pre-Rigvedic time**.

Even though after the victory in the **War of Ten Kings** many new generation Poets belonging to the well-known families of the ancient Rishis mostly resided to west of river **Sindhu**, still on some special occasions, some of them visited places located on **her** bank. **Rv-8.21,17** and **18** are the verses from **Mandala-8** that depict the same.

In **Mandala-1** and **10** there are a few verses devoted to **Saraswati** wherein the Poets have placed several demands on their beloved river (see verses **Rv-1.3,10 to 12**; and **Rv-10.17,7 to 10**). These references are termed as the **active references** as the content of these verses indicate that Poets physically conducted **Yajna** on the bank of river **Saraswati** and then prayed to her to bestow them pious thoughts, better health and wealth. On the occasion of a special **Yajna**, the composer of the verses **Rv-10.17,8** and **9** purposely reminded **close bonding his ancestors had with the river in the past** and requested **her** to accept his oblation. It means to say that although new generation Composers occasionally spent some time on the bank of river **Saraswati**, still they remained committed to her and religiously followed the devotional path shown by their forefathers.

As a matter of fact; during the entire Rigvedic Period, whether the Poets belonged to old lots (the **Five Early Mandalas**) or from the new generations (the **Five Late Mandalas**); they had **undying faith** in river **Saraswati** though **she** was in bad shape at that time.

In the history of mankind, **constant glorification of a non-living but naturally formed water carrying channel as “the Mother and the Goddess” by the generations of People** has become an exceptional example and that belongs to the **Bronze-age period**. **Rigved** composed in the **Indian Sub-continent** provides proper evidence for the same.

Among the several Indian rivers, river **Ganga** is considered as the most sacred river who is worshipped daily by performing **Aarati** in the places like **Haridwar, Varanasi** etc.

Rigvedic marvellous God **Indra** is no more treated as the Supreme Deity in the **Puranas/Legends** that were composed subsequently but retained as the **king of the Gods**.

On a small scale, **Yajna** is still performed as a household ritual and generally called as **Homa** or **Havan**. Only on a special occasion, as a public event of a grand scale, in presence of a big gathering, an open-air **Yajna** is conducted.

River **Saraswati** is known as **Ghaggar** that flows when **Haryana** state gets big rain.

Main objective of the present essay is to simplify the interpretation of some of the Rigvedic words and terms used by the ancient Poets found in some selected verses. This has been done mostly using **Common Sense** and **General Information** available in the public domain so that a common man can understand the same with ease.

I. Relevance of “Contexts and Contextual Clues” in understanding Rigvedic hymns:

As far as interpretation of **Rigved** is concerned, it is the primary responsibility of a present-day Translator and/or Researcher to provide accurate or best possible translation of the verses/hymns. To do so, along with the **literal meaning of the archaic words and phrases** used in the texts, a scholar must take into consideration the **contexts** of application of them as well. Then the combination of information from **word (s)** and **context** would take the reader closer to true meaning of the verses. In this way, translated literature would provide better insight on the intention of the Rigvedic Poets.

What is “context”? [4]

Context is the surrounding circumstances, concept and words woven together to form the setting or background for an event, or a statement or an idea.

There is no doubt that the contextual use of some words in the texts play key role in deducing meaning of the stanzas of a Vedic poem. Some scholars do take into account the context while inferring to Rigvedic verse, but others do not bother to look at it as they believe that it would create more confusion about the translated literature.

Some Key Points about the fruitful action of **Contexts** and **Words**.

- **Contexts** supplement **words** in determining improved meaning of a verse.
- Textual Meaning of an ancient word and the context of its use would give better wordy picture of the verse.
- Accurate meaning derived from a context would show skilfulness of a translator.
- Concurrent or simultaneous action of contexts and words produce desired result.

What is meant by a “contextual clue”? [4]

Whenever a reader tries to discover the meaning of an unfamiliar word or a phrase noticed in a text, then it would be more appropriate to look at the words or content that come before and after a new word/phrase. Context clue is a bit of information (direct or indirect) within a text that assists reader in decoding the meaning of unknown words/terms.

Thus, the factual meaning of many Rigvedic words/terms can be worked out with the use of context. In the present essay both **contexts** and **contextual clues** have been taken into consideration for better interpretation of the terms used in the Rigvedic verses/hymns.

II. Practical Meanings of some Rigvedic words and phrases:

Language is a medium of communication. Since old time, man has been using signs, gestures and different sounds created through mouth to express his thoughts and actions. Ancient People when lived in groups in the different parts of world first developed variety of the spoken words to communicate with the persons of their tribes. Afterwards, man developed structured speech to convey his feelings in a specific format.

Poetic language differs from the ordinary language as most of the Poets try to express their ideas obliquely and not in a straightforward manner. It simply means a Poet applies a creative approach to present his/her views on a chosen subject using several special tools commonly known as **Poetic Devices**.

Strictly speaking, **Rigved** is the literature composed in the Poetic form and hence demands active participation from every reader. In reality, **Archaic Sanskrit Language** of **Rigved** instigates the reader to explore many possible meanings hidden in the verses and compels him/her to think beyond the literal or plain meaning of the words/terms used.

In this section, we shall discuss a few chosen words and their realistic meanings.

a. Brahmanaspati as “Purohit”:

The Poet of **Mandala-2** verse **Rv-2.24,9** of the hymn addressed to **Brahmananspati** has called the God as **Purohit**/ पुरोहित.

Rv-2.24,9: *sa samñayaḥ sa vinayaḥ purohitaḥ sa suṣṭutaḥ sa yudhi brahmaṇaspatiḥ / cākṣmo yad vājaṃ bharate matī dhanādīt sūryastapati tapyaturvr̥thā ||*

In reality, the Composer in another verse **Rv-2.26,3** has designated **Brahmanaspati** as the “**devānām yaḥ pitaramāvivāsati / father of the Gods**”, Then **He** cannot be an ordinary **Purohit** or Priest like a **Yajna performer**.

Therefore, there is a need to know the context of application of this term.

About 100 years ago, during the British regime, in India, there were many princely states ruled by Hindu kings. As an age-old tradition, in the court of every Hindu King, there was a senior person called as **राजपुरोहित /Raj-Purohit** or **Royal Priest** who used to guide the king on the religious matters and rituals/customs to be followed by the Noble Family.

Similarly, in some courts there was one more post, known as **Raj-Guru**, a person whose main duty was to advice the King on Political, Administration, Judicial and Social affairs. In some kingdoms, an experienced person used to hold both posts.

It means to say that in the context of **Yajna** rite, the Poet has used the term **Purohit** for god **Brahmanaspati** to indicate as “**Divine Guidance Provider**” to the Rigvedic Priests. In other words, the term **Purohit/पुरोहित** here means the intuitive impulse created in the minds of Priestly People by God **Brahmanaspati** to go for new **Yajna**.

Please note that the Poet in the verse of earlier hymn **Rv-2.23,1**; has denoted **Brahmanaspati** as **Ganapati**—the leader of the **Deva Gana** and **Kavi- Divine Visionary**.

Here Poet feels that God **Brahmanaspati** is the “**Divine Advisor**” to the Priestly People (like **Raj-Purohit** or **Raj-Guru** acted for the king as explained earlier). Then all Rigvedic Priests can be identified as the implicit believers of **Brahmanaspati**.

***Note:** Legends composed subsequently tell us that most of the attributes of Rigvedic God **Brahmanaspati** were transferred to new God **Ganesha** who is popularly known as **Ganapati** and **Buddhi-Vinayaka**. Additionally, in **Puranas**, God **Brihaspati** of **Rigved** the bestower of the word power to the Poets has been designated as **Guru of the Gods**.*

b. Gandharva as “Vayu-Keshan”:

In the verse **Rv-3.38,6**; **Mandala-3** Poet has used a special phrase “***gandharvānapi vāyukeśān/ गन्धर्वानपि वायुकेशान***” to highlight speciality of the people of **Gandhara** origin.

Rv-3.38,6: *trīṇi rājānā vidathe purūṇi pari viśvāni bhūṣathaḥ sadāṃsi /
apaśyamatra manasā jaghanvān vrata **gandharvānapi vāyukeśān** //*

Although Rigvedic People were consuming **Soma** Juice regularly and same thing was also being offered as a sacrificial item in **Yajna**, but **Soma plant** was not grown in **Sapta-Sindhu** region of **Rigvedic Territory**. That is why some verses composed by the Poets tell us a myth that from a long distance, **Shyena** bird brings **Soma** plant to them. Actually, plant was the speciality of the **Gandhara** region and the natives of that area used to trade the same to the Rigvedic Priests who lived in the eastern part of Rigvedic Country at that time.

About 4000 years ago, considering life expectancy of a common man anything between 30 to 35 years and the persons involved in trade and commerce activities had to cover a long distance mostly on foot, then it can be said that only young and energetic people would have been going from place to place to sell the goods.

Based on above explanation, practically, the term **वायुकेशन** could mean a person who is tall and thin like hair (**keshan**) and hence moves quickly from one location to another like wind/**Vayu** (a fast mover).

Note: Please see the images of the young **Taliban Fighters from Afghanistan** especially those are in **early twenties** as the representation of physique of the ancient **Gandhara** region People. Most of the young **Talibans** are tall and slim but physically and mentally strong and since birth they are familiar with difficult mountainous terrains of the country.

c. River Saraswati as “*Paviravi Kanya*/Daughter of Lightning”:

In the verse **Rv-6.49,7**; the Poet has used a special adjective for river **Saraswati** and that is “**पावीरवी कन्या / pāvīravī kanyā**”. The phrase actually means “**Daughter or Child of lightning**”. Even though it is one time affair, still it clearly signifies the **rain dependency** of the river as **lightning occurs only when rain clouds gather in the sky**.

Rv-6.49,7: pāvīravī kanyā citrāyuhḥ sarasvatī vīrapatnī dhiyaṃ dhāt |
ganābhirachidraṃ śaraṇaṃ sajoṣā durādharṣaṃ ghrṇate śarma yaṃsat ||

Following examples would give better idea about the identification of a character based on its origin.

1. Usha/Dawn: In **Rigved**, **Usha** is specifically termed as the “**Daughter of Heaven**” as she is believed to move daily up in the sky, very close to Heaven who is treated as **her Father**.

2. Ganga: The eternal life-stream of Hindu religion has **her** origin in **Gangotri** glacier of Indian Himalayas and in some Legends; river **Ganga** is called as the **Daughter of Meru** or **Himalaya** Mountain.

Use of “पावीरवी कन्या / *pāvīravī kanyā*” phrase in the verse symbolizes **rainy season** and hence the term implicitly conveys **Saraswati** as a rain-fed river.

Special Note: *At least in India, lightning is always associated with the assembly of rain-clouds in the sky.*

d. Shata-himāsi Ila and hotrāṃ yaviṣṭha Bhāratīm :

Two Poets of different eras have used two separate phrases for the two distinct feminine characters to bring out their speciality. Surprisingly, both entities are also defined as the Goddesses in the number 8 or 9 verse of the **Ten Apris Hymns** of **Rigved**. In this section, one by one, we shall discuss the basic qualities of both feminine Rigvedic characters.

Shata-himāsi Ila* or **Hundred Wintered Ila*

Based on the **family tree of Bharata clan**, **Mandala-2** is considered as the **First Mandala** of **Rigved**. The hymn **Rv-2.1** has been composed in such a way that as if **Agni of Yajna** has personally invited all the Deities to attend the ceremony, then God **Agni** made the Poet the **master of ceremonies** to conduct the function in which the Poet introduced most of the Deities known to him to the listener (now reader) that too highlighting speciality of each of the Deities in brief. Hence the said hymn can be termed as the starting point of **Rigved**.

In the verse **Rv-2.1,11**; the Composer has deliberately grouped together four feminine characters **Aditi**, **Bharati**, **Ila** and **Saraswati** but did not call any of them as the Divine Being and briefly brought out special feature of each of them. The verse is as under [1].

Rv-2.1,11: *tvamagne aditirdeva dāśuṣe tvaṃ hotrā bhāratī vardhaseghirā /
tvamiḷā śatahimāsi dakṣase tvaṃ vṛtrahā vasupate sarasvatī ||*

The Poet has particularly mentioned the character **Ila** as **Shata-Himasi** means **Hundred Wintered** or in a simple way it can be taken as **a long lived entity**. Please not that, most of the **Rigvedic Deities** are the natural powers and for practical purposes they are treated as the **Immortal Characters**. Based on this logic, **Ila** has to be a mortal character that enjoyed a longer life-span but lived before the commencement of Rigvedic Composition. In the verse **Rv-10.95,18**; **Ila** has been identified as the mother of **Pururavasa**.

In the hymn **Rv-1.31**; along with king **Nahusha** and his son **Yayati**, the names of mother-son duo (**Ila** and **Pururavasa**) are also present which implies that all four mortal characters belong to same Royal Family who lived before the start of Rigvedic Composition.

Only possible reason to denote **Ila** as the **Goddess** in **Rigved** is her close association with the promotion of **Simple Agni Worship** prior to the development of **Yajna** ritual.

Mandala-7 Poet in the verse **Rv-7.16,8** of the hymn dedicated to **Agni** has told the past story of **Ila's** contribution in enhancing the power of **Pure Agni** by liberally adding **Ghruta/Ghee** during its worship. It means, it is **Ila** who suggested the ancient Rishis to add **Ghruta/ghee** copiously to increase the strength of **Simple** or **Pure Agni**. Later on, in the full-fledged **Yajna ritual** also, addition of **Ghee** to **Fire/Agni** became an essential activity. First line of the said verse is given below [**1**, #-symbol indicates Griffith Translation].

Rv-7.16,8: *yeṣām-iḷā ghṛtahastā duroṇa ānapi prātā niṣīdati |*

They in whose home, her hand bearing the **sacred oil**, **Ila** sits down well-satisfied

Hotrām yaviṣṭha Bhāratīm

As discussed earlier, although in **Apris hymns**, **Ila** is often glorified as the Goddess, but the use of a phrase *tvamiḷā śatahimāsi dakṣase* (hundred wintered **Ila** who is alert/agile even in her old age) in the verse **Rv-2.1,11** definitely indicates that she was human being who lived before the Rigvedic period. In the same verse, the Poet has provided description about another pre-Rigvedic character **Bharati** as *hotrā bhāratī vardhaseghirā*.

Potential meanings of the words used by the Singer for **Bharati** are given below [3].

Hotra- invocation at the time of **Yajna**/Sacrifice

Vardha- increasing

Gira-voice or speech that comes out of mouth

On the basis words selected by the Poet to describe important quality of **Bharati**, it can be said that **Bharati** would have contributed in shaping the early part of **Yajna** ritual by way of suggesting collective but loudly singing the **Poems of Praise**. Hence continuous chanting of Mantras at the time of **Yajna** including chorus may be attributed to **Bharati**.

Additionally, the Poet of the last but one Mandala in the verse **Rv-1.22,10** has regarded **Bharati** as होत्रां यविष्ठ भारतीम् . The verse is given below [1].

Rv-1.22,10: āgnā agna ihāvase *hotrām yaviṣṭha bhāratīm* /
varūtrīm dhiṣaṇām vaha //

Here **Yavistha** means a very young or youthful. It is most likely that the Poet of the hymn **Rv-1.22** in the **verse-10** has used the word **Yavistha** before word **Bharati** to portray **her** as a young and energetic person (many translators have linked the word **Yavistha** to God **Agni** to describe newly fashioned **Agni of Yajna** as **Youthful** one).

In short, Ila the mother of **Pururavasa** and one the **Goddesses** named in the **Apris** hymns had a longer **life-span** but **Bharati** other Goddess mentioned in the **Apris** hymns did not see her old age and probably died as young.

e. True meaning of the term “*Uchcha-chakram*”:

In the verse **Rv-8.72,10** there is a special reference of “**Uchcha-chakram**” term, most likely used in the context of fetching water from an open well. Presence of **Sinchanti** word in the verse does manifests that water was drawn from a well mainly for irrigating plants.

Rv-8.72,10: *siñcanti* namasāvatamuccācakraṃ pariḥmānam |
nīcīnabāramakṣitam //

With reverence they drain the fount that circles with its wheel above,

Exhaustless, with the mouth below.

The Poet of the verse has clearly mentioned that a **chakra/wheel/pulley** is placed or fixed **above a water-well** (*uchcha-chakram*) to facilitate the people to draw the water from it using rope and bucket technique (see **figure-1a, b**; images sourced from Internet/public domain) for irrigation purpose. Probably at the time of pouring water from a bucket, as it is tilted to one side hence the Poet says that its mouth faces downward. It means to say that here *uccācakraṃ* term stands for a **pulley**.

Figure-1a: Open well with a pulley

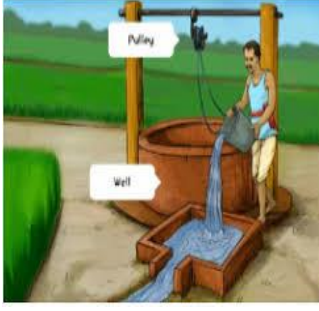


Figure-1b: Open well with cylindrical pulley



In the next verse **Rv-8.72,11** of the hymn; the Singer has used *Pushkare* word to indicate **Lotus** plant that requires plenty of water and hence grows in a pond or lake.

f. Various Meanings of Archaic word “/Suparna”:

Many Rigvedic words have more than one meaning and therefore, the linguistic context of application of each word is utmost important as it would give proper or better idea about the intention of Poet for the use of such word. Since multiple meaning words lead to variation in the translations, this aspect often creates confusion in the mind of a reader. As a matter of fact, the interpretation of some Rigvedic words/terms largely depends on the mindset of a translator or scholar and hence the translated work may not provide true wordy picture of the verse/hymn composed by the Rigvedic Poet. Here, as a case study, we are going to discuss about a Rigvedic word सुपर्ण /Suparna that has been used in many contexts.

Sanskrit word **Suparna** is generally related to **bird**. Selected references taken from **Ten Mandalas of Rigved** exhibit application of the said word in different settings.

Rv-1.35,7: term used either for Savitar or Surya/the Sun

Rv-1.79,2: high rising flames of Agni of Yajna

Rv-1.105,1: the Moon

Rv-1.105,11: high flying Birds

Rv-1.164,20 to 22: Two Birds sitting in the fig-tree (mid-sky)

Rv-1.164,47: Rain-clouds

Rv-1.164,52: the Sun

Rv-2.42,2: a bird like Eagle.

Rv-4.26,4: Shyena bird

Rv-4.43,3: Asvins

Rv-5.47,3: Red Bird (the Sun)

Rv-7.104,22: a bird like Eagle (see this and earlier verse again)

Rv8.100,8: a winged bird like Shyena/Falcon

Rv-9.48,3: Falcon like strong winged bird (related to Soma)

Rv-9.71,9: heavenly bird like Falcon (related to Soma)

Rv-9.85,11: a bird (related to Soma)

Rv-9.86,1: Birds or Eagles of Heaven (related to Soma)

Rv-9.86,24: Falcon bird (related to Soma)

Rv-9.97,33: Heavenly bird like Falcon or Eagle (related to Soma)

Rv-10.28,10: strong winged Eagle.

Rv-10.30,2: a purple colour bird

Rv-10.55,6: strong red colour bird (stands for the **Sun**).

Rv-10.73,11: birds

Rv-10.94,5: birds

Rv-10.114,3: two mighty birds (or Eagles)

Rv-10.114,4: a bird

Rv-10.114,5: a bird

Rv-10.123,6: a strong winged bird

Rv-10.144,4: a bird

Rv-10.149,3: Savitar as a strong pinion bird

From the above information, it is crystal clear that even though in most of the cases various Poets have used **Suparna/ सुपर्ण** word to indicate simply a **bird** or **high flying bird** like **Shyena/Falcon** or **Eagle**, but in a few places, same word has been applied for different mid-space moving factual or fictional characters such as **Asvins, Savitar, Surya, Moon, Rain-clouds**, in connection with **Soma** etc. It means to say that it is essential to consider the context of application of each word of **Rigved** too for better interpretation.

III. Socio-cultural traditions of the Rigvedic period:

Man is a social animal and his personal life involves bonding with others including members of his family, relatives/people of his community, friends, neighbours and the unknown persons on some occasions. Hence social interaction within or outside family is a regular feature of man's daily life. Since old time, based on the past experience, ancient people devised codes and practices that would define as well as govern the social relationships among the various people. But the norms set in the past were not uniform everywhere as the community leaders who decided the codes and practices had different perception on the same subject. Hence there are some common things and a few uncommon aspects in the customs of ancient tribes who lived in different parts of world.

In this section, we shall deal with some social traditions mentioned in some Rigvedic Hymns.

a. Division in the Priestly Family on the issue of Indra's worship?:

A verse given below informs us about the split in the family of a Priest due to God **Indra**.

Rv-8.1,6: *vasyānindrāsi me pituruta bhrāturabhuñjataḥ /*

mātā came chadayathaḥ samā vaso vasutvanāya rādhasē ||

O **Indra**, thou art more to me than *sire* or *niggard brother* is.

Thou and my mother, O Good Lord, appear alike, to give me wealth abundantly.

The Poet of above verse states that to him **Indra** is more important than his father and brother. The Composer further says that like his mother, God **Indra** was very close to him. His father and brother are more interested in the personal gains and hence do not show interest in traditional activity of worship of Gods. But the Poet demands wealth and fame from **Indra** for worshipping him regularly.

In other words, there was a serious problem in the Priestly family as father and brother of the Poet were mainly inclined to earn more wealth in a very short period. Hence both were not interested in performing lengthy **Yajna** ritual, and ready to do anything or any other work for accumulating wealth. But the Composer liked his role as a Priest and then asked God **Indra** to bestow him wealth in return.

b. A Grown-up Girl can choose her Life-partner:

Rv-10.27,12: *kiyatī yoṣā maryato vadhūyoḥ pariprītā panyasāvāryeṇa /*

bhadrā vadhūrbhavati yat supesāḥ svayaṃ sāmītram vanute jane cit //

How many a maid is pleasing to the suitor who fain would marry for her splendid riches?

If the girl be both good and fair of feature, she finds, herself, a friend among the people.

Second line of above verse explicitly tells us that a good looking girl of Rigvedic time has right to select her companion among the friends. It means to say that at least during the Last Mandala Period, the members of Rigvedic Community were open minded as the grown up girls and boys mingled with each other, and a girl was given an opportunity to find her spouse among her friend circle or the boys known to her.

c. Widow's re-marriage to her brother-in-law?:

Through the verse **Rv-10.40,2** that belongs to the hymn dedicated to **Asvins**, the Composer has presented an unusual or uncommon physical relationship between a **widow** and her **brother-in-law**. Please note that **Asvins** are often regarded as the twin gods who mainly look after the health and welfare of the people.

Rv-10.40,2: *kuha svid doṣā kuha vastoraśvinā kuhābhipitvaṃ karataḥkuhoṣatuḥ /*

ko vāṃ śayutrā vidhaveva devaram maryaṃ nayoṣā kṛṇute sadhastha ā //

Where are ye, Asvins, in the evening, where at morn? Where is your halting place, where rest ye for the night?

Who brings you homeward, as the **widow bed ward draws her husband's brother**, as the Bride attracts the groom?

When the second line of the verse is taken as a custom of a second marriage of a widow with her brother-in-law (most likely younger brother of her deceased husband); means wedding takes place within the family. It implies that **there was no “Sati Pratha/ सती प्रथा”** in which a wife of deceased husband has to submit herself to funeral pyre of her husband in presence of relatives or she is buried alive along with the dead body of her husband.

Levirate marriage refers to a practice in which a widow marries a brother of her deceased husband. The term is derived from the Latin word *levir*, meaning "**husband's brother.**" **Levirate marriage** is allowed in some **North Indian societies** such as the **Punjabis, Jats** as it provides protection for the widow and her children. This is done so that land or property owned by the deceased husband would continue to stay in his family [4].

*Note: In the year 1986, a Hindi movie titled as **Ek Chadar Maili Si** was released that was based on **Ranjinder Singh Bedi's Urdu** novel of the same name. The movie provides insight into old age custom of re-marriage of a widow to her brother-in law prevalent in Punjabi Jat community. Earlier, her mother-in-law used to abuse her for not bringing enough dowries and after her re-marriage to brother-in-law, she has to suffer at the hands of the latter.*

d. Impotent king is not respected by his subjects:

Hymn **Rv-10.86** deals with a special situation arises due to incapability of a king to produce a male child due to impotency. Of course, the king then engages his old time friend to get successor for his kingdom from his wife through **नियोग /Niyoga** relationship, but for some time, the king has to go through a bad phase of his life when his own people ignore him. The verse **Rv-10.86,1** reflects the mood of the subjects.

Rv-10.86,1: Men have abstained from pouring juice they count not **Indra** as a God.

Where at the votary's store my friend **Vrsakapi** hath drunk his fill. Supreme is **Indra** over all.

The Poet has nicely prepared a plot for the composition of hymn wherein **Indra** plays a role of an impotent king, then **Indrani** becomes his wife/ Queen and **Vrisha-kapi** an unfamiliar character does the role of **King's close friend** who enters into physical relationship with the **Queen** upon request from the **King**. In the Last Verse; **Rv-10.86,23** the Poet has revealed the truth or result of the actions taken to obtain a heir.

The Composer in the verse **Rv-10.86,1** conveys us that the people stopped pouring **Soma** juice to **Indra**. It literally means the subjects started neglecting presence of the **King/Indra** in a social gathering, as despite married for many years, the latter failed to produce progeny. It indirectly means the people refused to pay attention to impotent King.

e. “*Suryaa/ सूर्या*” marries only to Moon/Soma and not to Four Different Entities:

Hymn **Rv-10.85** is one of the most discussed hymns of **Rigved** in which the Poet has narrated a story of wedding ceremony of the bride **Suryaa/ सूर्या** who is the daughter of God **Surya/the Sun** to the bridegroom **Soma** or **Moon**.

In reality, the hymn depicts life story of a girl child whose parents have abandoned her (most probably it is a story of a girl born through illicit relationship) immediately after birth as her father, God **Surya/the Sun** plays no role in bringing up **Suryaa** and also goes missing in the complete marriage function.

The most surprising thing about the translation of this hymn is, **Vedic Scholars** did not take intense look at the content of the whole hymn but tried to spread misinformation about the character **Suryaa** as if she marries to **Four Different Characters**, one after another, as their names appear in the two verses **Rv-10.85,40-41**.

Rv-10.85,40: *somaḥ prathamo vivide ghandharvo vivida uttarah |*
trītyo agniḥ te patisturiyaste manuṣyajāḥ ||

Soma obtained her first of all; next the **Gandharva** was her lord.
Agni was thy third husband: now one born of woman is thy fourth.

Rv-10.85,41: *somo dadad ghandharvāya ghandharvo dadadagnaye |*
rayim caputrāṃścādādaghnirmahyamatho imām ||

Soma to the **Gandharva**, and to **Agni** the **Gandharva** gave:
And **Agni** hath bestowed on me riches and sons and this my spouse.

In the above mentioned verses, Poet informs us that first-**Soma**, second-**Gandharva**, third-**Agni** and fourth one is the **Spouse of her Choice (Soma/Moon?)** are the four different entities that come in **Suryaa's life** since her childhood. Unfortunately, use of the word **पति / Pati** in the verse **Rv-10.85,40** confuses every reader as the Sanskrit word **पति / Pati** generally means a **master** or **husband** or **lord**.

But when reality check is done on all verses of the hymn **Rv-10.85**; then a **contextual clue** is noticed in the verses **Rv-10.85,28** and **29**.

Rv-10.85,29: *parā dehi śāmulyaṃ brahmabhyo vi bhajā vasu |*
kṛtyaiṣāpadvatī bhūtvā jāyā viśate patim ||

Give thou the woollen robe away: deal treasure to the Brahman priests.
his female friend hath got her feet, and as a wife attends her lord.

This particular verse intimates us that when **Suryaa** first time goes to the house of her husband **Soma/Moon** for mating purpose to produce offspring, after their first physical intimacy, next day the Brahmin Priest collects the garments used by **Suryaa** at the time of mating and upon observing blood-stains on her garments he declares that **Suryaa-Soma** marriage is valid one. This is due to fact that despite moving with **Asvins** and **Pushan** on several occasions; **Suryaa** maintains her virginity, meaning thereby she does not have physical relationship with any of her close friends before her marriage to **Moon/Soma**.

Here the fundamental question is, “**If Suryaa in the past, had married first to Soma (juice), on the second occasion to Gandharva, and third time to Agni, then how could she remain “virgin” at the time of her first intercourse with the Moon who happens to be her last but official or ceremonial husband?**”

From the above contextual reference, it is crystal clear that in absence of parents of a new born girl, in the early days first she was looked after by **Soma** (means she survived on the Soma juice as **Suryaa** is termed as **God Sun’s daughter** and for human’s child, it would be **milk of cow**), then **Gandharva** or an outsider trained her the field of music, dance etc. and after attaining maturity **Agni** taught her basics of cooking. In this way, these three independent characters become **Guardians** or **Care Takers** for her and **not Husbands** as understood by several Scholars.

Based on the above explanation, Sanskrit word पति / **Pati** could also mean a **Guardian** or a **Care Taker**.

General Observations on the hymn Rv-10.85

1. In absence of the parents of **Suryaa**, God **Savitar** becomes her **foster father** and does **Kanya-daan** in presence of **Agni** (in Hindu Marriages, this ritual is still performed in front of a **fire /Agni-Sakshi**) and hands over **Suryaa** to her spouse, the **Moon**.
2. In the verse **Rv-10.85,39** the Poet requests **Agni** to give **hundred autumns** lifespan means a very long life to Groom. *Sharadah Shatam*/hundred years phrase symbolizes an ideal lifespan that is applicable to a human being only. This is due to the fact that since **pre-Rigvedic** era, the ancestors of the Rigvedic Priests have defined **the Imaginary Vedic Deities as the Immortal Characters**. Hence an Ideal Life-span of hundred years is not applicable to any Imaginary Rigvedic Deity.
3. The verse **Rv-10.85,42** tells us about completeness of the family life. A Family that includes sons, grandsons of an old couple who live happily together.
4. Verse **Rv-10.85,46** conveys us when a newly married girl first time goes to her husband's house to start a new life with spouse, there she finds that in his joint family, there are many family members living together under one roof such as Father-in-law; Mother-in-law; Brothers-in-law, and Sisters-in-law. It means, unlike her earlier place of living, this new house is full of close relatives, and hence her first priority must be to know each of them, and mentally be ready to live with all of them.
5. Verse **Rv-10.85,44** informs us in the family, there are four and two footed animals.
6. To interpret the hymn in a better way, some of the verses have to be re-arranged to streamline the flow of information provided by the Poet in them.

Note: *In a semi-nomadic “**Kanjarbhat**” community who mostly lives in rural Maharashtra state of India, still, there exists an age-old tradition of virginity test of a bride. When a newly married girl first time mates with her husband after wedding, some senior community members (the **caste panchayat**) purposely take possession of a bed-sheet used at the time of first intercourse of a married couple to observe the blood stains on it. When stains are seen on a bed-sheet, means a married girl is virgin or pure (virginity test). Otherwise, the marriage can be annulled or broken.*

IV. References of *Vrishabha*/Bulls or Oxen drawing the Rathas of the Vedic People:

Please take a close look at the verse **Rv-1.100,16**.

Rv-1.100,16: *rohicchyāvā sumadaṃśurlalāmīrdyukṣā rāya rjraśvasya |*

vṛṣaṇvantaṃ bibhraftī dhūrṣu rathaṃ mandrā ciketa nāhuṣīṣu vikṣu ||

The red and tawny mare, blaze-marked, high standing, celestial who, to bring **Rjrasva** riches,

Drew at the pole the **chariot yoked with stallions**, joyous, among the **hosts of men** was noted.

It is to be noted here that above verse is from the **second to last Mandala of Rigved** that talks about ***Vrishna drawn Ratha*** of the king **Rjrasva** who probably belongs to **Nahusha** clan (in **Mandala-1**, there are two hymns dedicated to God **Asva**/the **True Horse**).

If we go by the rigid opinions of the well-known **Vedists** and **Indologists**; the famous **Archaeologists** who were personally involved in the excavation of the various sites of **Harappan Civilization**; and the eminent Historians who have written several articles/books on the **Indus Valley Civilization**, then based on their assessments, it can be easily concluded that the **True Horse drawn Ratha** is the **real identity** of the **Rigvedic People** that separated the **Aryas of Rigved** from other tribes who also lived in the **Indian Sub-continent** in the ancient time. It is generally said that several Scholars and the Professionals who studied both **Rigved** and **Harappan Civilization** intensely for many years can never go wrong on one of the most important topics of **Rigved** and that is; **Asva/Ashva drawn Ratha**.

The reality check conducted on the contents of some verses of **Rigved** reveals altogether different story. The content of the verse **Rv-1.100,16** manifests that **Vrishabha/bulls** were used to pull **Rathas** of the **king** of that time. Ideally, during the period of composition of **Mandala-1**, there should have been a large number of the **true horses** with the **Aryas**. This is because; by this time, the **Aryas** (the term includes both the Priests and the Ruling Class) whether **migrated** or **indigenous** had already spent considerable time in the eastern and western parts of **Rigvedic Territory**. Therefore, the population of **the true horses** in their possession would have increased significantly. Surprisingly, Rigvedic Poet in the verse

Rv-1.100,16 speaks about **Ratha** being driven by the **Bulls/Vrishna** and not by the **true horses/Asvas** as assumed by the **Experts and Researchers** from different fields.

This is not the only example in the complete texts. Following references do exhibit that the journey performed by the **Rigvedic People** in **Rathas** that were drawn by an animal like **Bull/Vrishabha** and not **Asva (the true Horse/ Equus Caballus)** as believed by many.

- **Mandala-3** verses **Rv-3.33,9** to **13** indicate that the leaders of **Bharata** tribe along with Poet **Visvamitra** were travelling in the **Rathas** drawn by the animals other than **Asvas**, but they had to wait on the banks of rivers **Vipas** and **Satudri** till the water in them recedes to the level less than the axles of their **Rathas**.
- In **Mandala-3** verses **Rv-3.53,17** to **20**; the Poet has shared his experience of a long distance trip in the **Ratha** pulled by **Gavou/Bulls** and not **Ashva**. In fact, as per content of the verses, while travelling in a **Gavou** drawn **Ratha**, the **Poet** constantly lived under fear of the breakdown of his vehicle due to failure of a Pin or an Axle.

Incidentally, the Poet of the verse **Rv-8.14,3** has designated **Indra** as **Dhenu / miltch cow** first and then demanded **Cows** and **Asvas/Gamasva** from their most favourite God. In reality, **Dhenu** can never deliver **Asva** or a **true Horse** anytime. Hence here **Asva** term stands for **race quality bull** as a new born calf of a cow on maturity can become a bull or an ox. Some verses of **Rigved** do indicate since **pre-Rigvedic time**, Vedic People were fond of the cart races.

Additionally, the Poet of the verse **Rv-1.164,2** has used **Asva** word in a different context.

Rv-1.164,2: *sapta yuñjanti rathamekacakrameko asvo vahati saptanāmā |*
trinābhi cakramajaramanarvaṃ yatremā viśvā bhuvanādhitasthuḥ ||

The Composer in the above verse cryptically tells us that on behalf of **Seven Adityas**, **Eko Asva** or **single Asva** actually means the **Sun** (as if god **Surya** acts as the **Prime Mover**) takes the whole world forward by one year through three main seasons (here **tri-nābhi** means three main seasons, namely, **Summer**, **Rainy** and **Winter** that are experienced in a year in the **Indian Sub-continent**). It is a never ending cyclic event that occurs every year.

Then question arises, “in **Rigved**, where do we find reference of the **True Horse**?”

The Composer of the hymns **Rv-1.162** and **Rv-1.163** that are addressed to God **Asva** definitely talks about the presence of **True Horse**. Information presented in these two hymns does convey that the Poet has witnessed the sacrifice of the **True Horse** performed for the purpose to send *him* to **Heaven** to serve the **Gods there**. The Poet has also brought out the fact that the **True Horse** has arrived in the Rigvedic Territory from the **Gandharva** region. Presence of *Chaga* word (stands for **mountain Goat** that is noticed in **Mandala-1** only) in the verse **Rv-1.162,3** does manifest that at the time of composition of these two hymns, the Poet was residing close to **Mountainous** or **Gandharva** region located to the west side of river **Sindhu**. Then, a **Horse rider** (this is based on the concept of **mounting of Asva by the Gods**) came from the North-west direction with proper bridle/head gear (*Rashana*) to the place of the **Rigvedic Priests**. The Poet in the verse **Rv-1.163,4** says that only God **Varuna** who is called as the **all knower god** since **pre-Rigvedic time**, knows about the birth or origin of **Asva**. It indirectly means, the **True Horse/Asva** is a **new entrant** in the **Vedic Philosophy**, and that is why a **new comer Asva's** past is not known to the Poet.

In other words, the proper information about the **True Horse** is found in **Mandala-1** only which happens to be the **last but one Mandala of Rigved**. Similar to word “**Suparna**” discussed earlier, the term “**Asva**” has been used in contexts like **power, animal, Surya** etc.

When it was clear that the artefacts, seals, and the remains of the animals recovered from the various sites of **Harappan Civilization** do not show evidence in any form for the presence of the **True Horse (Equus Caballus)** anywhere in the North-west part of the **Indian Sub-continent** during the **Mature Harappan Period**, then it was the primary responsibility of the **Vedic Scholars** who are in strong favour of the **Indigenous Aryas** to revisit **Rigved** to know the factuality from the texts. In many Rigvedic hymns, the Poets have described use of mythical “**Asva drawn Ratha**” (*Asva*, an imaginary quick runner is mentally designed by the **Ribhus**) mainly to bring the **Deities of their Imagination** to **Yajna** site. Unfortunately, various Experts overlooked this aspect and focused their attention only on a single word “**Asva**” which then became the **main point of discussion** for one and all.

Note: *Whenever Vedic Scholars discuss the subject of the **races of Rigvedic Rathas**, some of them immediately remember the **chariot race** scene shown in the English classical Movie “**Ben-hur**” (year 1959 film). But the same persons do not bother to know the truth of **Bullock-cart races** held in **Maharashtra** state of **India** since a long time. Recently, **Supreme Court of India** lifted ban on the **Bullock-cart races** that was imposed in the year 2014. This year summer (2022), the **Bullock-cart races** were held in many villages of **Maharashtra**.*

V. The historical perspective of the hymns devoted to river Saraswati:

As discussed elsewhere, there are three hymns exclusively dedicated to river **Saraswati** in the all **Ten Mandalas**. These hymns belong to the **Two Early Mandalas of Rigved** and those are **Mandala-6** (hymn **Rv-6.61**) and **Mandala-7** (hymns **Rv-7.95** and **96**).

When the contents of these hymns are studied critically and analysed from a **historical perspective**, then we come to know real story behind the **emotional attachment** of the **Generations of the Rigvedic Poets** to river **Saraswati**.

Here the term “**Historical Perspective**” means understanding a topic in the light of its early phases/starting point and subsequent developments occurred in stages covering the social and material culture, political, intellectual, and emotional aspects that influenced lives of the people when lived on *her banks* and the actions taken by the ancestors in the past.

Here we shall discuss about the verses that are linked to historical Events.

A. Reviewing the Mandala-6 hymn Rv-6.61 from a Historical Perspective:

In reality, this hymn describes a **long series of events** that took place in the past on the banks of river **Saraswati** starting with **her** origin to pathetic condition of the river at the time when this hymn was composed. Point-wise explanation is as given below but purposely divided into different subjects with the suitable change in sequence of some verses.

a. Journey of river Saraswati from Mountain to Plains:

- **Verse-2 depicts Mountain origin of the river:**

This is based on the description present in the said verse wherein the Poet says that **Saraswati** has very strong waves/current and that is why, starting from the mountain (*Girinam*), she could easily overcome all the obstacles came on **her** path.

- **Verse-13 hints at entry of river Saraswati in Plains:**

Use of special phrase *ratha iva bṛhatī* /रथ इव बर्हती in the **verse-13** makes it clear that now **her bed** has become wider like **Ratha** which manifests that presently **she** is flowing in the Plains.

These two references hint at origin of river **Saraswati** as a small stream from a mountain and **her** subsequent transformation to a river in the plains of Vedic region.

b. Past Events summarise spread of the Vedic People beyond river Saraswati:

- **Verse-3 talks about spread of Vedic Culture after killing the foes like *Brisaya*:**

In this verse, the Composer tells us a very old story of the annihilation of the trouble creators like **Brisaya** who had no faith in the old Vedic Gods (**Adityas?**) but had influenced (*mayinah*) other people to oppose **Early Vedic Philosophy**. Poet further states that after destroying the bad elements like **Brisaya** from that area as he used to inject poison regularly (means he used to instigate the people not to believe in ancient Vedic Gods), in addition to river **Saraswati**, Vedic People of old time extended their dominion and then settled on the banks of other rivers of that region.

Note: From the above explanation, it can be said that the people who created the **Earliest Vedic Philosophy** were originally lived only on the bank of river **Saraswati**. After defeating their opponents like **Brisaya** they expanded their colonies on the banks of rivers of the adjoining areas (most likely **Parushni, Sutudri, Vipas** etc.).

- **Verse-9 reveals westward expansion of the kingdom of “Aryas”:**

In the **verse-9**, the Composer highlights a new incidence that took place a long ago and that is the growth of regime of the **Aryas** beyond **seven sisters’ area**. The Poet has described this particular aspect giving example of daily movement of God **Surya** from east to west direction. This might have happened during the period of king **Nahusha** who ruled from a town situated on the bank of river **Saraswati**.

In this way, two different verses inform us about the two phase territorial expansion of the **Early Vedic Doctrine** that was originated on the bank of river **Saraswati**. **Verse-3** exhibits augmentation of the land adjacent to river **Saraswati**, whereas **verse-9** indicates stretching of kingdom beyond the **Sapta-Sindhu** region.

c. Social and Cultural Developments on the bank of river Saraswati:

- **Verse-1 brings out social concern of Divodasa:**

In the **verse-1**, the Poet narrates ancient story of **Divodasa** who was the son of **Vadhryasva** and glorified the former as a great devotee of **Saraswati** and then earned name and fame due to **her**. King **Divodasa** facilitated repayment of the debts (*rna*) of

the people by donating a part of his wealth to the needy persons, and hence became great donor (*Dashushe/ दाशुषे*). In this way, **Divodasa** could control the activities of the niggards (**Panis**; possibly very similar to present-day money lenders) in that area.

- **Verse-12 intimates us about the raising of the “Five Tribes” together:**

In the **verse-12**, the Composer has used *Pancha-jata vardhyanti*; a very special phrase probably to convey us that the first generation of the “**Five Tribes**” (**Anu, Druhyu, Puru, Turvasa** and **Yadu**) were born and brought together on the bank of river **Saraswati**. In other words, as the children belonging to a Famous Royal Family, all five spent their childhood or early years of their life in a place located on **her** bank.

Note: Divodasa mentioned in the verse Rv-6.61,1 is different from king Divodasa, the Mandala-6 tribe leader of Bharata clan who was the son of Srnjaya and not Vadhryasva.

d. Report on the factuality of current state of river Saraswati:

Through **verse-14** the Poet has sent indirect signal that the present condition of river **Saraswati** was very bad. In the said verse the Composer has warned his beloved river that if she does not give **her milk** (water) to the people who worship her regularly, then they would be left with no option but to go to distant places, means they would leave **her banks** due to non-availability of water in **her bed**.

In all probabilities, this was the real condition of river **Saraswati** when the Poet composed the **verse-14** which happens to be the last verse of the hymn.

B. Re-examination of Mandala-7 Hymns dedicated to river Saraswati:

Rv-7.95 and **Rv-7.96** are the two hymns addressed to river **Saraswati** by the Poets of **Vashistha** clan. We shall consider selected verses of these two hymns that exhibit historical connection of river **Saraswati** with the members of the Noble Family.

- **Verse-7.95,2 reports condition of Saraswati at the time of king “Nahusha”:**

The Composer of the verse specifically talks about the fabulous state of river **Saraswati** when king **Nahusha** ruled from a town situated on **her** bank. In the verse the Poet has clearly stated that during **Nahusha’s** regime the river used to complete **her**

full course **from mountain to sea**. It means to say that at the time **Nahusha**, there was ample water in the river probably due to adequate rainfall throughout the year.

- **Verse-7.96,2 spells out poor state of Saraswati under Purus' rule:**

Content of the verse points out that **Purus** used to come to live on **her banks** when they were **grassy** means **during rainy season only**.

Please bear in mind that the Poet came to know about **Nahusha's** period story of the river only when he visited the **Purus' land** after king **Sudasa's** convincing victory in the "**War of Ten Kings**". At that point of time, he personally observed relocation of the People of the **Puru tribe** when water was not present in the river.

From the above references, it is crystal clear that during the early part of king **Nahusha's** reign, there was no water scarcity in river **Saraswati**. But when the **Purus** were ruling same region (upstream part of river or present-day Haryana state), river **Saraswati** used to flow during rainy season only. It may be attributed to scanty rainfall (**Vritra** effect/ *Meghalayan Age?*). Both references reflect past and present state of river **Saraswati** respectively but applicable to the up-stream part of the river.

Summing up the discussion on "**the historical perspective of the hymns devoted to river Saraswati**", by and large, these three hymns reveal Past History and Present State of river **Saraswati**. **Contextual clues** present in the hymn **Rv-6.61** manifest that the **Earliest Vedic Philosophy** has its origin on the bank of river **Saraswati** and from there these ancient thoughts/beliefs got spread to other parts of the **North-west** region of the **Indian Sub-continent** when the ruling class brought more area under their control. The verse **Rv-6.61,3** makes it obvious that after neutralizing the people like **Brisaya** who hated Gods (**Seven Adityas**) of the ancient **Rishis**, then Vedic People moved to banks of other rivers but adjacent to river **Saraswati** for settlement purpose. Additionally, verse **Rv-6.61,9** hints at extension of **Aryas'** kingdom from **east to west** direction on the line of daily travel path of God **Surya**.

As per verse **Rv-7.95,2** depiction, a long ago, during king **Nahusha's** time, river **Saraswati** used to flow from mountain to ocean. But the verses **Rv-6.61,14** and **Rv-7.96,2** indicate pathetic condition of river **Saraswati**, a factual state of the beloved river of the **Aryas**, witnessed and noted by the Poets in these two verses. It means, a long ago, when **Sapta-Sindhu** region used to receive sufficient rainfall, **Saraswati** had ample water in **her** bed. Subsequent shortfall in the seasonal rains for several years caused the river to go dry.

VI. Significance of the hymn that lauds several Rigvedic Rivers and river Sindhu:

Hymn **Rv-10.75** has unique place in **Rigved** as the two of its nine verses provide names of the important rivers of the **Rigvedic Territory** on whose banks many generations of the **Rigvedic People** lived and some of them made outstanding contribution to the Ancient Vedic Ideology by composing several **Poems of Praise** over a very long time. Original Sanskrit verses-5 and 6 are given below.

Rv-10.75,5: इमं मे गङ्गे यमुने सरस्वति शुतुद्रि स्तोमं सचता परुष्या ।
असिक्त्या मरुद्वृधे वितस्तयार्जीकीये शृणुह्या सुषोमया ॥
imaṃ me gaṅge yamune sarasvati śutudri stemam sacatā paruṣṇyā |
asiknyā marudvṛdhe vitastayārjīkiye śṛṇuhyāsuṣomayā ||

Rv-10.75,6: तृष्टामया प्रथमं यातवे सजुः सुसर्त्वा रसया श्वेत्या त्या ।
त्वं सिन्धो कुभया गोमतीं कुमु मेदृत्वा सरथं याभिरियसे ॥
tṛṣṭāmayā prathamam yātave sajūḥ sasartvā rasayāśvetyā tyā |
tvaṃ sindho kubhayā gomatīm krumummehatnvā saratham yābhirīyase ||

General Observations on the “Nadi-stuti Richas/Verses”

1. On the whole, in the two verses of hymn **Rv-10.75**; the Poet has given names of the many rivers belonging to North-west part of the Indian Sub-continent.
2. The Singer has begun the **verse-5** with river **Ganga** of the Far East Zone as if at that time, he was present on **her** bank, and then looking in the west direction, one by one, he started taking the names of other rivers that are located to west of river **Ganga**.
3. In the **verse-6**; the Poet has mentioned river **Sindhu** and **her** western tributaries.
4. In fact, information presented in these two verses actually leads to division of the complete **Rigvedic Territory** into two parts, one part located to east of river **Sindhu** that includes river **Saraswati** and second region placed to west of river **Sindhu**. Then river **Sindhu** becomes the boundary between the **two distinct regions**.
5. The best part of these two verses, the Composer has brought out the **Relative Geographical Positions of the Rivers of Rigvedic Country**. Based on the available information, it can be said that river **Saraswati** is geographically placed between river **Yamuna** (Eastern River) and **Sutudri** (West Side River).
6. In true sense, through these two verses, the Poet has expressed “**Vote of Thanks**” to all rivers for giving life-saving support and love for the generations of the Priests.

Now going back to hymn **Rv-10.75**; remaining seven verses of the said hymn are addressed to river **Sindhu**. Therefore, momentarily, if the verses **Rv-10.75,5** and **6** are taken out from the hymn **Rv-10.75**; then remaining seven verses together would automatically become part and parcel of the only hymn in **Rigved** dedicated to river **Sindhu**.

It seems that, earlier, hymn **Rv-10.75** was specifically composed to glorify river **Sindhu** but probably to reduce **her** importance, subsequently some other Poet independently composed two verses **Rv-10.75,5** and **6** and then inserted them lately in the hymn.

Out of the seven verses that shower praise on river **Sindhu**, the **verse-8** is a very special one as it talks about **her contribution** in creating wealth for the people who resided on her west bank. This includes gold, wood for making Ratha and animals like Asva, sheep etc. Probably that is why we find more number of **Dana-stuti Yajnas** in **Mandala-8**.

Rv-10.75,8: स्वश्वा सिन्धुः सुरथा सुवासा हिरण्ययी सुकृता वाजिनीवती ।

ऊर्णावती युवतिः सीलमावत्युताधि वस्ते सुभगा मधुवृधम् ॥

Rich in good steeds is Sindhu, rich in cars and robes, rich in gold, nobly-fashioned, rich in ample wealth.

Blest Silamavati and young Urnavati invest themselves with raiment rich in store of sweets.

As a matter of fact, the Poets of different era in many **Praise Songs** frequently expressed their desire to have more wealth and better health from river **Saraswati**, but it always remained just as the expectations or **wishful thinking** since their beloved river where once their ancestors lived and developed early philosophy had gone dry since a long.

Another worth mentioning feature about river **Sindhu** is **her** presence in that **Mandalas of Rigved** wherein river **Rasa** also finds **her** place. It means to say that both rivers go hand in hand in the **Six Rigvedic Mandalas** and they are **Mandala-4; 5; 8; 9; 1 and 10**. This information also hints at no Poet from the **Four Early Family Mandalas** i. e. **2; 3; 6; and 7** did cross or personally visited river **Sindhu** in their lifetime.

This can be confirmed from the **Nadi-stuti** verse **Rv-10.75,6** in which river **Sindhu** and river **Rasa** are placed in the same verse. It also implies that river **Rasa** was the western tributary of river **Sindhu**. It also means that whom so ever Poet paid visit to river **Sindhu**, he or his fellow colleagues did not forget to see river **Rasa**.

Although several generations of Priests lived to west of river **Sindhu**, still as like their ancestors, the new generation Composers too had unending faith in river **Saraswati**.

VII. History of Soma Juice, Soma Sacrifice and Soma Pavamana or Self-Purified Soma:

The Poets of the verses **Rv-3.48,2**; **Rv-4.18,3** and **Rv-7.98,3** in their composed **Praise songs** for **Indra** specifically highlighted that new born **Indra** drinks **Soma** juice. Logically speaking, well before the birth or creation of God **Indra**, the ancestors of Rigvedic People knew **Soma Drink** then only **new born Indra** can have it. In fact, in all five verses of the hymn **Rv-3.48** the Composer has poetically described **Indra**'s affection for **Soma** since **his** birth and the Poet has further said that **his** mother (Earth) feeds **her milk** to **her child Indra**.

Now a question is “**what was the source of Soma plant for the Vedic People?**”

Rv-2.13,1: *ṛturjanitrī tasyā apas pari makṣū jāta āviśad yāsu vardhate |*

tadāhanā abhavat pipyuṣī payo.amśoḥ pīyūṣaṃ prathamam tadukthyam ||

The **Season** was the parent, and when born there from it entered rapidly the floods wherein it grows. Thence was it full of sap, streaming with milky juice: the milk of the plant's stalk is chief and meet for lauds.

In the above verse, the Poet has called **Ritu/Season** as **janatri** / mother of a plant that requires plenty of water for its growth, and upon maturity it gives milk. Since the hymn is dedicated to **Indra**, here the un-defined plant needs to be assumed as **Soma**. In other words, **Soma** (whose juice was regularly consumed by the Poets) was a seasonal herb that grew in the region where there was no scarcity of water at all. Since at that time the Rigvedic People were under the influence of **Vritra** (real Drought), and hence in all probabilities the plant was not grown in the area where they lived. The Poet of the hymn **Rv-1.93** in the verse **Rv-1.93,6** has cryptically described the origin of **Agni** and **Soma** [1].

Rv-1.93,6: *ānyaṃ divo mātariśvā jabhārāmathnādanyaṃ pari śyenoadreḥ |*

agnīṣomā brahmaṇā vāvṛdhānoruṃ yajñāya cakrathuru lokam ||

One of you **Matarisvan** brought from heaven, the **Falcon** rent the other from the mountain.

From the above verse, it is obvious that since **pre-Rigvedic time**, old Rishis believed in **Agni of Yajna** was brought by **Matarisvan/wind** from Heaven and **Soma** was fetched by **Shyena**/Falcon bird from rocky mountain (**Adreh**). Even the verses **Rv-3.43,7**; **Rv-4.18,13**; **Rv-4.26,7**; **Rv-8.100,8**; **Rv-9.48,3**; **Rv-9.68,6**; **Rv-9.72,3**; **Rv-9.86,24**; **Rv-10.11,4**; **Rv-10.144,4** and 5 do convey that **Soma** was delivered by **Falcon/ Shyena** (from Heaven?) to the place of

Rigvedic People from a long distance. Keeping aside poetic description, it can be concluded that **Soma** plant was not native of **Sapta-Sindhu** region. It is most likely the outside traders used to supply the same to the forefathers of the Rigvedic Priests since a very old time. Some verses like **Rv-3.48,2; Rv-5.43,4; Rv-9.18,1; Rv-9.46,1; Rv-9.62,4; Rv-9.71,4; Rv-9.85,10; Rv-9.95,4** do intimate us that **Soma** grows in the **mountainous region**.

Once it is understood that **Soma** was outsourced to the **Rigvedic Territory** from a long distance, then the nearest **mountainous place** to **Rigvedic Country** was the **Gandhara** region that was located to west of river **Sindhu**, a part of the **Extreme North-west Corner** of the **Indian Sub-continent**. The Poets of several Rigvedic hymns have glorified mythical story of “**Indra’s love for Soma**”. As **Soma** is mostly linked to the location called as **Gandhara**, many related references are found in **Mandala-9** (**Rv-9.83, 4; 9.85,12; and 9.86,36; Rv-9.113,3**); and **Mandala-10** (**Rv-10.123,4 and 7; Rv-10,139,4 to 6**). Additionally, the verse **Rv-10.34,1** establishes relation of **Mujavata mountain** (outside the Rigvedic Territory) with **Soma plant**. It can be taken as a source of best quality **Soma plant**. Please bear in mind that in the verse **Rv-9.5,10; Soma** is called as **Vanaspati/plant**.

The verse **Rv-10.10,4** links **Gandharva** with **water/ flood**, means there was no paucity of water in **Gandhara** region, hence conditions were favourable for growth of **Soma**.

The content of verses from the two hymns **Rv-2.36-37** addressed to **Various Gods** indicate that drinking of **Soma juice** was a **seasonal** activity (this is based on presence of **Ritu** word four times in the six verses of the hymn **Rv-2.37**). In the verse **Rv-2.37,1** the Poet expresses that **Soma** drink can be enjoyed in a group when the **Yajna** event is sponsored by **DraviNod/ a Wealth Granter**. This is most likely due to seasonal availability of **Soma stalks** that too after exchanging some valuable item (considering existence of barter system at that time) in the region where the Priests resided at that time. Hence they needed a sponsor or wealth donor/**DraviNod** (reference of **sons of Bharata** in the verse **Rv-2.36.2**) to celebrate the occasion on a grand scale. Use of sheep wool (see word **Avibhi** in verse **Rv-2.36,1**) as filter manifests awareness of purification process but no mention of word **Pavamana**.

Making and Using of Soma Juice

Soma the mysterious juice of **Rigved** was the most popular item as many Rigvedic verses inform us that it was regularly used by the Rigvedic Priests either for drinking purpose or for **Yajna** ritual. There are more than 120 hymns addressed to this character and in many

hymns **Soma** has been designated as the God as well. As consumption of **Soma** used to give relief from pain, increase resistance against the common diseases hence it was called as a great healer and therefore, **Soma** was considered as the life extender. The Rigvedic Composers felt that **Soma drink** incites or stimulates them to compose a new poem. Therefore, some Vedic Experts say that, after drinking **Soma**, a person used to get stimulated (or feel intoxicated?) and it is for this reason the men of that time used to like it very much.

As discussed earlier, **Soma** was sourced from outside, then it can be said it would come in the form of dried stalks. These dried stalks of **Soma Plant** (a creeper?) were soaked in water for some period and then pressed between the stones to obtain brown or golden colour liquid that was filtered out for drinking or libation purpose. The juice was also mixed or enriched with other ingredients/liquids like milk, ghee or honey to offer to the **Deities of Imagination** of the Rigvedic Poets and then consumed by the participants of **Yajna**.

On a special day, **Soma** was offered as a libation to **Agni of Yajna** thrice in a day; one each in the morning, midday, and evening. This is known as **Soma Sacrifice**.

The Priests believed that drinking **Soma** gives them immortality. They also believed that when **Soma** was offered in **Yajna** in the names of the Rigvedic Gods like **Indra, Agni** etc; it strengthens the power of Gods and instigates them to kill the enemies of the Priests.

It is said that the **Ribhus** (three brothers; **Vaja, Ribhuvan** and **Vibhavan** who lived before the start of Rigvedic Period) used their expertise for extracting more quantity of juices from the **Soma stalks** (probably they were the famous **Vaidyas**/Physicians of ancient time who had acquired skills for taking out juices/*kashayam/Kadha* from the medicinal plants), hence made available more quantity of **Soma Juice** for sacrificial purpose, and that tempted the Priests to conduct more number of **Yajnas** in a day.

Soma sacrifice has a very old history

The verse **Rv-9.10,6** intimates us that during the ancient time, when the old **Vedic Rishis** opened the doors for expressing thoughts in the form of poems, then the men like **Ayu**, (**Ayu**, the earliest Poet also figures in the verse **Rv-1.96,2**) an old time Singer accepted the challenge and aggressively came forward (described as *vrishno*/bull) for composing early **Songs of Praise** at the time of **Yajna**.

Rv-9.10,6: *apa dvārā matīnām pratnā ṛṇvanti kāravaḥ /*

vṛṣṇo harasa āyavaḥ //

The singing-men of ancient time open the doors of sacred songs,
Men, for the mighty to accept.

It other words, since the inception of proper **Yajna** ritual, composing and singing a new song had become the regular feature, and in the same manner, use of fresh **Soma** juice in the **Yajna rite** had developed into a routine practice. It means, **Soma sacrifice** is as old as the **composition of the Poems of Praise**.

Speciality of the hymn Rv-1.91

Among the several hymns dedicated to **Soma** that are found in **Rigved**, the hymn **Rv-1.91** is a very special one as in a single hymn, the Poet has provided gist (mythical and personal experiences shared by earlier Poets) of almost all characteristic features of **Soma** that are part of the Rigvedic Compositions since inception as well as the opinions of the pre-Rigvedic Rishis. In this hymn, **Soma** is treated as **God** and has been described to be present in Heaven, Earth, mountain, plants and Waters, and praised as the **King** of the forest too.

Here **Soma** is called as the life extender, guidance provider, **Vritra** slayer, protector of worshipper, wealth finder etc. as if **He** performs duties of **all Rigvedic Gods**.

Soma Pavamana

One of the most striking features of **Rigved** is **Mandala-9** whose all **114 hymns** are exclusively devoted to **Soma Pavamana**. In other words, this is the **only Mandala** wherein all hymns are addressed to a **Single Rigvedic Character**. In the verse **Rv-9.6,3**; **Soma** is named as “**an ancient gladdening juice**”, means it was known to Vedic People since a long.

Basically, Rigvedic word पवमान / **Pavamana** means “**being purified, strained**”, or “**self-purified divine being**”. **Rv-9.1,1** is the very first verse of the **Mandala-9** in which the Poet has termed **Soma** as पवस्व सोम धारया means “**Soma, you purify your-self**”.

Now moving to the main point of **purification of Soma**, since **Soma** is designated as “**God**”, **he** has to be **self-active to upgrade himself**, and hence believed to be “**purifying himself**” and not by other person. It means to say that “**Pavamana**” indicates a **self-initiated process** of up-gradation of **normal Soma liquid** to “**Pure or the highest quality Soma**”. That

is why; in some hymns of Mandala-9 (**Rv-9.3; 9.10; 9.82; 9.84; 9.85; 9.97** etc. the Composers have described “**Soma** rushes to wool filter to become **Pure/ सोमः पवित्रे** or **Soma Pavamana**” and then flows for various Gods in the jars/vessels. It means, the transformation from “**raw or crude Soma**” to “**Soma Pavamana**” takes place as per the **wish of Soma**.

Information available in **Mandala-9** tells us that, the People of that time when lived in the **Extreme North-west corner** of the **Indian Sub-continent** used **female sheep wool** as a strainer (**अव्यो वारे**) or filter to remove impurities from the pressed **Soma**. Rigvedic word “**Avi / अवि**” means an “**Ewe**” or a female sheep. The Poets of **Mandala-9** have used **avyaye, avyam, avyata, avyaya, avya** as the variants of original word **Avi** in their songs.

Words like “**Vare/ वारे**” and “**Pavitre/ पवित्रे**” found in many verses of **Mandala-9** are generally taken as a **filter** or **strainer** used for **Soma Purification**.

In this way, as described by the Poets of **Mandala-9**, raw **Soma**, as a part of **self-improvisation** passes through a purification process to become “**Soma Pavamana**”.

The most striking observation on the hymns dedicated to “**Soma Pavamana**” is the Poets of the verses **Rv-9.71,2; Rv-9.73,1; Rv-9.74,7; Rv-9.99,1**; have specifically termed “**Soma Pavamana as Asura**”. But surprisingly, in entire **Mandala-9**, no other Rigvedic God has been designated as **Asura**. This holds true for **Indra** as well, the **Supreme Deity of Rigved** who as per the available description largely depends on **Soma drink** to get energised before killing regular enemy **Vritra**.

As per the views of the Poets of **Mandala-9**, “**Soma Pavamana**” or “**self-reformed Soma**” is **Matchless Divine Being** who is the **main source of Power** to other **Deities of Rigved** and the **constant source of knowledge** to the members of **Poetic Community**.

Note: *Apart from **Mandala-9**; **Pavamana** word is found only in the verse **Rv-8.101,14**. Its conspicuous absence in all **Family Mandalas** (**Mandala- 2 to 7** are called as the famous **Family Mandalas of Rigved** as each of these **Six Mandalas** is believed to have composed by the Poets belonging to a particular Family) casts doubt about the knowledge of **Pavamana** word used for the purification process mentioned in **Mandala-9** to the Poets of **Five Early Mandala**. Therefore, the proponents of the **Aryans Migration Theory (AMT)** who often state that the **Aryas** entered into the **Indian Sub-continent** from **North-west border (Khyber Pass)** with the numerous **Horse drawn Chariots** need to answer the most relevant question “why is **Pavamana** word missing in the **Five Early Mandalas**?”*

VIII. Myth of “Lack of Rain”, “Real Cause of Rain” and “Impact of Rain on Life”:

The most widely discussed myth in the entire **Rigved** is “**God Indra slays Demon Vritra and gets water released from the captivity of the latter for the Rigvedic People**”. It clearly indicates that there was **scarcity of water** where the **pre-Rigvedic People** lived. Based on the information available about river **Saraswati** in the texts (this has already been discussed in the earlier sections), it can be said that Vedic People were struggling for water as rain-fed river **Saraswati** had gone dry a long back. Then a question arises, **how did it happen?** In the verse **Rv-5.32,4** the Poet has cryptically given answer for the same.

Rv-5.32,4: *tyaṃ cid eṣāṃ svadhayā madantam **miho napātam** suvṛdham tamoghām |*
vṛṣaprabharmā dānavasya bhāmaṃ vajreṇa vajrī ni jaghāna śuṣṇam //

Him, **whom the heavenly food of these delighted, child of the mist**, strong waxing,
couched in darkness
Him the bolt-hurling Thunderer with his lightning smote down and slew, the
Danava's wrath-fire, **Susna**.

In the above verse the Composer described that a **Danava** named as **Shushna** (not **Vritra**) is the **child of mist/ मिहो नपातं** who moves in darkness and sucks water from the clouds as it makes his food. It means, the Poet feels that although the clouds are seen in the sky but would not give rain as **Danava Shushna** has already taken out water from them.

Above verse clearly tells us that there was **rain deficiency** in some part of the **Rigvedic Territory** and that could be the main reason for drying up of river **Saraswati**.

What could be better explanation for **drying up of river Saraswati** than the content of the verse **Rv-5.32,4**? It means, the Poet has presented his logic/reason for the real problem.

Please remember that the Poet of the verse **Rv-6.49.7** has specifically denoted river **Saraswati** as **Pavi-Ravi Kanya** means **child of Lightning** which symbolizes **rainy season**. Also the verse **Rv-6.52,6** indicates swelling/**Pinvmana** of river **Saraswati** as the eastern part of Rigvedic Territory received heavy rains due to direction of **Indra** to **Parjanya**.

Now coming to the point of **Making of Rain**, the verse **Rv-1.164,7** from the **Second to Last Mandala** hints at the real cause of the rains on Earth.

Rv-1.164,7: *iha bravītu ya īmaṅgha vedāsyā vāmasya nihitaṃ padaṃ veḥ /*
śīrṣṇaḥ kṣīraṃ duhrate ghāvo asya vavriṃ vasānā udakaṃ padāpuḥ ||

Let him who knoweth presently declare it, this lovely Bird's securely founded station.

Forth from his head the Cows draw milk, and, wearing his vesture, with their foot have drunk the water.

The **Mandala-1** Composer through the verse **Rv-1.164,7** tells us the fact that let the knowledgeable person or the wise man declare that **He (Surya/the Sun)** is behind this act. The Cows (**Ga**) derive milk from **him** practically means; **rain-clouds** get water from **his head** means **his thoughts**. The **Cows/clouds** have drunk the water from **His Feet**, means rain-clouds are formed due to vaporization of ocean water that occurs when the rays of the **Sun** fall on the earth (heating of ocean or sea water generally occurs in **summer**).

Now taking up the point of the **Rejuvenation of Life on Earth**, three verses that belong the hymn **Rv-1.164** mentioned below define the actual role of rain and hence water in the regeneration of life on Land.

Rv-1.164,47: *kṛṣṇaṃ niyānaṃ harayaḥ suparṇā apo vasānā divamut patanti |*
ta āvavṛtran sadanād ṛtasyādīd ghṛtena pṛthivī vyudyate ||

Dark the descent: the birds are golden-coloured; up to the heaven they fly robed in the waters.

Again descend they from the seat of Order, and all the earth is moistened with their fatness.

Rv-1.164,51: *samānametadudakamuccaityava cāhabhiḥ /*
bhūmiṃ parjanya jīvanti divaṃ jīvantyaghnaḥ ||

Uniform, with the passing days, this water mounts and fails again.

The tempest-clouds give life to earth, and fires re-animate the heaven.

Rv-1.164,42: *asyāḥ samudrā adhi vi kṣaranti tena jīvanti pradiśaścatasraḥ /*
tataḥ kṣaratyakṣaram tad viśvamupa jīvati ||

From her descend in streams the seas of water; thereby the world's four regions have their being,

Thence flows the imperishable flood and thence the universe hath life.

In other words, due to intense heat of the Sun, particularly in summer season, vaporization of ocean water occurs that results in formation of the rain clouds. These clouds laden with water vapour then move in the sky from one place to another like a high flying bird (*Suparna*) then pour water on different locations of Land in the form of **Rain**.

In the view of the Poet, **normal seasonal Rain (Parjanya)** is nothing but water from sea/land that goes up because of fire/Agni directed from Heaven (Surya). Earlier evaporated water again comes back to Earth in the form of rain, and then flows like flood that energizes life on Earth. It means, **frequent flooding of the land and rivers** of the *Sapta-Sindhu* region was taken as the true indication of sufficient rain-fall during the **Rigvedic Era**.

Every year this cyclic activity of Nature rejuvenates life on Earth wherein God **Surya**/the **Sun** plays the key role. It means, only **Annual Rainfall** in adequate quantity used to uplift the life of Vedic People. During **pre-Indra** period, ever flowing rivers due to **normal seasonal rains** were the main cause of prosperity in the *Sapta-Sindhu* locality.

The contents of the verses **Rv-1.164,7; 47; 51 and 42** prove beyond doubt that the Poet is fully aware of the true reason behind the **Rain-fall** in the **Rigvedic Territory**. He also understands that there is no substance in the well-known **Rigvedic Myth** of **Vritra** takes water of the whole world in **his** captivity, causing hardship to the People who reside on the bank of river **Saraswati**, and then comes **Indra** to kill **Vritra** who is said to have rescued the rain-clouds, making the rains possible everywhere.

IX: Distinctiveness of the Hymn Rv-1.164:

Hymn **Rv-1.164** is different from other hymns of **Rigved** as the Poet has covered several subjects and seriously attempted to give true wordy picture of the **Rigvedic world**. From the contents of the verses of the hymn **Rv-1.164**, it is crystal clear that, initially, the hymn would have been composed in different segments or parts and then several segments joined together to make the most discussed hymn ever composed by the generations of the **Rigvedic Poets**. This is because in the hymn the Poet has explored some untouched topics that are not related to each other. Although many scholars call the complete hymn as the **Riddle Hymn**, but in true sense, some verses related to “**Two Birds**” can be termed as the real puzzle. The

Poet in other verses has hinted at answer to the puzzle. When these 52 verses are rearranged as per the subjects discussed, and then it becomes easy to interpret the different segments of the hymn independently.

Table-2 provides subject-wise division of the verses into seven classes.

Table-2

Category	Subject Titles of the Categories	Related Verses (Numbers)
a	“Aditi as Cow” and “Surya as her Calf”	4, 8, 9, 10, 18, 28, 31, 32, 33
b	Story of the “Seven Adityas” and “Asvins”	1, 2, 3, 5, 15, 17, 27, 36
c	Riddle of “Two Birds Sitting on a Fig Tree”	20, 21, 22, 16, 19, 26, 30, 38
d	God “Surya” as the Shaper of Day/Night, the Seasons, and the Year	11, 12, 13, 14, 44, 48
e	God Surya as the “Rain-Maker” and river Saraswati	7, 29, 42, 47, 49, 51, 52
f	Basis of the Structure of Chhandas (Meters) and the Suktas/Hymns	23, 24, 25, 41, 37, 39, 40
g	Promotion of Yajna and the Concept of “That One/One God”	6, 34, 35, 43, and 46, 50

From the above, it is clear that the verses of the hymn **Rv-1.164** are randomly arranged in which the Poet has brought out some new concepts that are not discussed by earlier Poets. The most outstanding feature of the hymn is after composition of the verses on different topics in segments; most probably Poet himself rearranged the verses so that the listener (now reader) would struggle to understand them in a **coherent manner**. Poet himself has hinted at the same in one of the composed verses that is given below [1].

Rv-1.164,45: Speech hath been measured out in four divisions, the Brahmins who have understanding know them.
Three kept in close concealment cause no motion; of speech, men speak only the fourth division.

It is very similar to shuffling of a **pack of playing cards** before start of any card game. Please note that a pack of cards contains **52 cards** (excluding Jokers) and the hymn **Rv-1,164** too contains **52 verses** in total. **What a coincidence!**

Similar trend is also seen in case of the special hymns of the Mandala-10, such as Rv-10.85; Rv-10.86; Rv-10.121; Rv-10.125; Rv-10.129; Rv-10.130 etc. The re-arrangements of some verses have definitely added twist to the Poems but created confusion for the reader.

One of the important features of the hymn **Rv-1.164** is the presence of **Yearly Time Scale** in the form of 360 days full (720 number is derived from 360 days + 360 nights) that is further divided into twelve months of 30 days each; and three main seasons comprising of 4 months each (Rainy, Winter and Summer) experienced in a year in the Indian Sub-continent. Alternately, the 12 months period of a year is also divided into six Bi-monthly seasons (**Grishma, Varsha, Sharad, Hemant, Shishir, and Vasant**). In this way, the Poet has successfully superimposed **Ritu-Chakra** (a **wheel of seasons**) over **Kaal-Chakra** (a **wheel of time**) of a year. Probably, when there was no rain or scanty rainfall during **Varsha**/rainy season, then in that year, instead of six, the Poet recorded Five Bi-monthly seasons.

Much before the **Dhamma-Chakra** of the regime of **Ashoka the Great** (popularly known as **Ashoka-Chakra** that was engraved on a stone pillar found in **Saranath**), the Rigvedic Poet in the hymn **Rv-1.164** had crafted **wordy picture** of **Kaal-chakra**.

On the philosophical front, the Poet in the verse **Rv-1.164,46** has specifically used a phrase “एकं सद विप्रा बहुधा वदन्त्यग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः | |” *ekam sad viprā bahudhā vadantyaṅniṃ yamaṃ mātariśvānamāhuḥ* || to introduce a new concept of **Single God**.

It means, in reality, **God** is **one** but Brahmin calls **him** by different names. Poet has taken the names of Vedic Gods like **Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Surya, Agni, Yama** and **Matarisvan** in the same verse. It depicts, the Poet has given more stress on **facts** than **myths**.

In addition to **Rv-1.164,46** reference of “**One God**”; the Poet of **Mandala-8** in the verse **Rv-8.58,2** has introduced the concept of “**Origin of the world from One God**”. In the said verse the Composer has specifically quoted names of three Rigvedic Deities that are physically seen every day and they are **Surya, Usha/Dawn** and **Agni**.

It seems that the Poet of the verse **Rv-1.164,46** wanted to put his weight behind God **Surya** and hence described the god as **heavenly nobly-winged Garutman** possibly to declare **him** as the **True One God** who can be physically seen by all.

Note: To decode the most discussed **Rigvedic Riddle** of the “*two birds sitting in a fig tree*” noticed in the verses **Rv-1.164,20 to 22**; the reader must refer to the verses **Rv-1.35,6** and **7** wherein there is mention of “*Suparna, Savitar and Surya*” in them. Additionally, read the verses **Rv-10.114,3 to 5** as well, in which we find reference of “*two Suparna/ birds*” out of them, one bird enters the sea and also watches activities of whole universe (**Surya**).

X. Real Story behind the Human sacrifice:

In **India**, there are many **Traditional Vedists** and/ or **Ritualists** who strongly oppose the people who state that the **animal sacrifice** was the integral part of **Rigvedic Yajna**. Hence it is next to impossible to discuss with them about the **Human sacrifice** in **Yajna**.

Now take the **penetrative look** at the verses given below.

Rv-1.84,13: With bones of **Dadhyac** for **his arms**, Indra, resistless in attack,
Struck nine-and-ninety Vrtras dead.

Rv-1.116,12: That mighty deed of yours, for gain, O Heroes, as thunder heraldeth the rain, I publish,
When, by the **horse's head**, Atharvan's offspring **Dadhyac** made known to you the Soma's sweetness.

Rv-1.117,22: Ye brought the **horse's head**, Asvins, and gave it unto **Dadhyac** the offspring of Atharvan.
True, he revealed to you, O WonderWorkers, sweet Soma, Tvastar's secret, as your girdle.

Rv-1.119,9: To you in praise of sweetness sang the honey-bee: Ausija calleth you in Soma's rapturous joy.
Ye drew unto yourselves the spirit of **Dadhyac**, and then the **horse's head** uttered his words to you.

In the aforementioned verses, there is a common factor **Dadhyac**, a name of person (Rishi **Dadhichi** as mentioned in the Legends) who happens to be the son of **Atharvan** (**Bhrugu** Clan Rishi who lived in during pre-Rigvedic period). The Poets of **Mandala-1** have specifically talked about the two organs of body of **Dadhyac**. The verse **Rv-1.84,13** that belongs to hymn dedicated to **Indra**, informs us that **Dadhyac** had offered his bones/**Asthi** (story also found in the Legends) for shaping weapon **Vajra** or Thunderbolt for **Indra**.

In the verses **Rv-1.116,12; Rv-1.117,22** and **Rv-1.119,9** taken from the hymns dedicated to **Asvins**, the Poet has described the twin Gods who mainly look after health and welfare of the people, want to fit **Head of Asva** (Horse?) to **Dadhyac**. It clearly hints at **missing head** of **Rishi Dadhyac**. Then a question arises, ‘**when and how did it happen?**’. Considering all four references together, it can be concluded that a long back, when **Yajna** ritual was being evolved, **Rishi Dadhichi** would have offered his body for sacrifice at the time in one of the early **Yajnas**. This event could be the first human sacrifice of **Rigved**. Additionally, verse **Rv-10.163,3** explains that the Poet knew the names of the **internal organs** of human body that are **invisible**. Hence it can be said that **Human sacrifice** definitely existed in **Rigvedic era** but would have been permitted only on special occasion.

XI. Drawing the true picture of the Rigvedic Characters “Dasas and Dasyus”:

Dasas and **Dasyus** are the two controversial characters of **Rigved**. With the exception of **Mandala-9** that was composed in the **Extreme North-west corner** of Rigvedic Territory, the term **Dasa** is found in remaining **Nine Mandalas**. However, **Dasyu** word is seen in **All Ten Mandalas of Rigved**. Strictly speaking, Rigvedic Priests have regularly portrayed the **Dasas** and the **Dasyus** as their opponents. In some verses or hymns both words are present meaning thereby, on some occasions they join together to create problem for the Priests

Since several decades, Vedic Scholars and Historians have clearly identified the **Dasas** and the **Dasyus** as the **two distinct human tribes** who used to trouble the Priests. Their simultaneous or separate presence in many hymns of **Rigved** that were composed on the either directions of river **Sindhu** over a very long period makes it difficult to accept the established views. The key points discussed below would definitely raise doubts about the beliefs of present-day Vedic Scholars.

- **Ten Mandalas of Rigved** are composed in different parts of Vedic Territory which is manifested by presence of several rivers in the texts including river **Ganga** of the Far-east zone to river **Rasa** of the Extreme North-west corner. It means to say that the generations of the Priests moved freely from one region to other without much difficulty. Also **no Poet of Rigved** has anywhere mentioned that the **Dasas** or **Dasyus** obstructed their journey while moving from one place to other.
- During the period of **Five Early Mandalas**, the **five kings of Bharata clan** (a warrior tribe) who lived with the **Priests** did not eliminate the **Dasas** and the **Dasyus**.
- In reality, king **Sudasa** of **Mandala-7** defeated the army of **Ten Kings** on the bank of river **Parusni**, but could not replicate the same story against the **Dasas** and **Dasyus**.
- **Pakthas** who are termed as the enemy of the **Bharata king Sudasa** in **Mandala-7**, later on described as the friends of the new generations of the Priests in **Mandala-8**; one of the **Late Mandalas of Rigved** (see verses **Rv-8,22,10** and **Rv-8.49,10**), who also took part in **Yajna** rite. Whereas, the **Dasas** and the **Dasyus** are always depicted as the hostile characters throughout the Rigvedic period. It means, unlike **Pakthas**, the **Dasas** and the **Dasyus** did not change their behaviour despite interacting with the Rigvedic Priests on numerous occasions but continued enmity since beginning.
- If we go by the opinion of Vedic Experts and consider the **Dasas** and the **Dasyus** as the human beings, then obviously, they would have spoken some languages among the

members of their communities. Surprisingly, till date, no linguist has listed out the loan words that have come to archaic **Sanskrit** from the languages of these two tribes. On the contrary, some linguistic scholars have identified number of words that have been borrowed by the Rigvedic Poets from the ancient languages such as **Munda**, **Dravidian**, **Old Persian** and the unknown language of the residents of **Bactria Margiana Archaeological Complex (BMAC)**.

From the above discussion it is clear that these two Rigvedic characters are different from the several human tribes mentioned in **Ten Mandalas** as many Poets have paid special attention to the **Dasas** and the **Dasyus** only (**why?**). It should be noted here that the Rigvedic Composers in the **Poems of Praise** did not given much information about behavioural aspects of most of the Human Tribes mentioned in the documents that includes their favourite tribe **Bharata** or the **Five Tribes** who earlier to their defeat in the **War of the Kings** opposed **Indra** and **Yajna** or even about **Paktha** or **Kikata** etc. Hence it is necessary to identify these two mysterious characters properly using information available in the Rigvedic hymns.

Before we proceed further, there is a need to know meanings of some terms used by the Poets in **Rigved** that are related to the **Dasas** and the **Dasyus**. **Table-3** gives multiple meanings of some of the Rigvedic terms used for these two entities.

Table-3

Rigvedic Word	Its meaning in English [3]
Dasa/ दास	Servant or Slave
Dasyu/ दस्यु	Robber or Barbarian
VarNa/ वर्ण	Colour, Lustre, Outward Appearance, Tribe, Class
Amanusha/अमानुष	Inhuman, Brutal, Not a man, Anything but a man, Non-human, Celestial or Superhuman

Now take a serious look at the verse taken from the hymn **Rv-10.86** wherein the Poet cryptically talks about **Niyoga** (नियोग) relationship between a Queen who is the wife of an undefined Tribe Leader and the friend of the latter. Since the King is impotent, he invites **Vrishakapi** to have physical intimacy with his wife to achieve successor for his kingdom.

Rv-10.86,19: Distinguishing the **Dasa** and the **Arya**, viewing all, I go.

I look upon the wise, and drink the simple votary's Soma juice. Supreme is Indra over all.

In the above verse the Composer says that now **Vrishha-kapi** who is the friend of the king can easily differentiate between **Dasa** and **Arya**. In true sense, the verse is related to sexual interaction of **Vrishha-kapi** and the **wife of king**. Here the Poet has narrated story in such a way that **Vrishha-kapi** declares himself as an **Arya** or civilised person and not a **Dasa**.

If we assume that **Dasa** belongs to a human tribe, and then the main question is, “how does the Poet know about the **sexual behaviour** of the members of the **enemy tribe**?”

In all probabilities, the term **Dasa** in the said verse stands for a male **Dog**, a domesticated or a stray animal who openly mates with its female counterpart during breeding season and exhibits animal instinct/rude behaviour while having intercourse.

The **Last Mandala** verse of **Rigved; Rv-10.62,10** hints at the use of the term “**Dasa**” for the “**Domesticated Dog**”.

**Rv-10.62,10 : Yadu and Turvasa, too, have given two Dasas, well-disposed,
to serve together with great store of kine.**

It is a commonly seen thing that a Shepherd and a Cowherd generally use the **Dogs** to mark the movements of the flock of sheep and the cattle respectively.

Above examples manifest that Rigvedic word **Dasa** has more than one meaning.

Contextual definition of the words VarNa/ वर्ण / and Amanusha/अमानुष

Many Archaic Sanskrit Words have more than one meanings (see **Table-2**) and hence depending on the mind-set of a translator it is obvious to have variation in translated texts. In the following paragraphs we are discussing **two words** that are related to **Dasa** and **Dasyu**.

1. VarNa/ वर्ण :

Vedic Scholars often quote the verse **Rv-2.12,4** to impress upon the reader that Rigvedic word **VarNa** does manifest **colour** of the **Dasa** Tribe. The said verse is as under.

**Rv-2,12,4: yenemā viśvā cyavanā kṛtāni yo dāsaṃ varṇamadharaṃghuhākaḥ /
śvaghnīva yo jighīvān lakṣamādadaryaḥ puṣṭāni sa janāsa indraḥ //**

Please bear in mind that nowhere in the **Ten Mandalas of Rigved** we find any reference of skin colour of the Rigvedic Priests or the People of **Arya** Community. Hence it would be more appropriate to consider **VarNa/वर्ण** term as a class of an entity. **Griffith** has translated “दासंवर्ण /dāsamṣ varnam” phrase of the verse to indicate **Indra** defeats a **brood of Demons (Dasas)**, means a family of offspring or young or a breed/ species or a group of the **Dasas/Demons**. Please note that there is no mention of any colour in the verse.

Therefore, in Rigvedic context, **VarNa** word needs to be taken a **class** or **category**.

2. Amanusha/ अमानुष :

In the **Tenth Mandala** of **Rigved**, in two consecutive verses of the hymn **Rv-10.22** dedicated to **Indra**, the Poet has used **Amanusha** term to target the behavioural aspects of **Dasyu** and **Dasa**; the two distinct but devil characters, and specifically **शुष्ण /Sushna**.

Rv-10.22,7: *ā na indra prkṣase.asmākaṃ brahmodyatam /
tat tvāyācāmahe.avaḥ śuṣṇam yad dhannamānuṣam //*

Rv-10.22,8: *akarmā dasyurabhi no amanturanyavrato amānuṣaḥ /
tvantasyāmitrahan vadhardāsasya dambhaya //*

In the verse **Rv-10.22,11**, the Composer has used a phrase; **शुष्णस्य दम्भयो जातं/ śuṣṇasya dambhaya jātaṃ** to highlight destruction of the entire generation of **Sushna**.

Additionally, in the verse **Rv-10.95,8**; the Poet has used the term **Manusha** to indicate **Pururavasa** as a **man** and the word **Amanusha** to describe **Urvashi** as an entity other than human or not like man or different from human being.

Rv-10.95,8 : *sacā yadāsu jahatīṣvatkamamānusīṣu mānuso niṣeve /*

There is one more reference wherein **Manusha** and **Amanusha** terms are found and that verse belongs to **Mandala-2**; the **Earliest Mandala of Rigved**.

Rv-2.11,10 : *aroravīd vrṣṣ nṣ ṣo asya vajro.amānusṣam ṣyan mānusṣo nijūrvāt |
ni māyino dānavasya māyā apādayat papivān sutasya //*

Above verse is from the hymn addressed to **Indra** and here the Composer talks about mythical act of bullish or mighty **Indra** who kills **Danava** the non-human (**Amanusha**) enemy (**Vritra** or serpent **Ahi**) for **Man** (**Manusha/Priest**) using **his** weapon **Vajra** but after drinking **pressed Soma**. Here **Danava** is denoted as “**A-manusha** or **non-human**”.

From the above discussion, it can be easily inferred that the Rigvedic Composers have not used both words i.e. **VarNa/** and **Amanusha/** as **colour** and **cruel/inhuman** respectively. When the references of Rigvedic terms “**Varna**”, and “**Amanusha**” are seen together in the context of the Rigvedic “**Aryas/Aryans**” with respect to the **Dasas** and the **Dasyus**, then it can be said that the word, **Varna** represents a **Class of an entity** which is different from the **tribe of Arya**, and **Amanusha** actually means a **Non-human** or a character that does not belong to human race at all.

Then there is a need to search for the answer to a question; “**who are the Dasas and the Dasyus mentioned in Rigved?**”.

Identification of the Dasas and the Dasyus from the Contextual Clues

As the **Dasas** and the **Dasyus** the two demonic characters of **Rigved** are believed to be the **non-human entities**, then a question crops up, **why did they trouble the Priests?**

The probable answer to afore-stated question is their interference in **Yajna** ritual. Since **Yajna** is the brain-child of the ancestors of the Rigvedic Priests, the ritual became integral part of the day-to-day life of Rigvedic People. Although no Poet has clearly mentioned about the intrusion of the **Dasas** and the **Dasyus** in **Yajna** rite, still some of the Poets have left **contextual clues** in the composed songs that makes us to draw the inference.

A. Contextual Clues linked to Dasa:

1. Krshna-Yoni (Rv-2.20.7) :

The word “**Krshna**” is related to a colour; i.e. “**Dark**” or ‘**Black**’.

“**Yoni**” is another word, whose actual meaning is a Female Genitalia or Womb but practically, it could mean a Chamber or Cavity having an opening/entrance.

Hence **Griffith** [1] translated the word **Krshna-Yoni** as “**Dwelling in Darkness**” is the most appropriate one, as it is applicable to a character which hides in a chamber during day time.

2. Vṛṣa-Sipra (Rv-7.99,4) :

In Mandala-7 verse **Rv-7.99,4** the Poet has highlighted a new characteristic feature of **Dasa** as *dāsasya cid vṛṣasiprasya māyā*. Griffith [1] has interpreted Sanskrit word, *Vrsasiprá* as **Bull-jawed Dasa**. Some linguists have translated *Vrsasiprá* term as 'Bull-Lipped' or 'Bull-Faced'. **Bull-Jawed** manifests that facial feature of **Dasa** or facial out-look of **Dasa** or its **Face** very similar to a **Bull** or the **jaws** of **Dasa** have strength of a Bull.

3. Stri-Dasa (Rv-5.30,9) :

Some scholars including Griffith [1] consider Sanskrit word, *Stri Dasa* as **Woman Dasa** which is not correct. Correct translation would be just **Female Dasa**. In case of some categories of the animals, a senior female leads the group, and dictates the terms to other members of a clan.

4. Dāsīrviśaḥ sūryeṇa sahyāḥ (Rv-2.11,4):

In the verse **Rv-2.11,4** there is a special reference of **Indra** and **Surya**/the **Sun** join together to overcome **Dasa**. It indirectly means, with the sunrise, **Dasa** disappears from the scene. In addition to this, verses **Rv-5.33,4** and **Rv-10.148,2** also indicate that God **Surya** and **Dasa** are the adversaries. Incidentally, all these references are found in the hymns devoted to **Indra**. In other words, Rigvedic character **Dasa** goes missing as soon **Surya** takes its firm position in the sky. It implies that **Dasa** is mostly active in the **darkness**. Please remember that **Indra** is an imaginary but invisible God, but **Surya**/the **Sun** is real entity who is seen daily. Similarly, **Dasa** is a living being who prefers the **darkness** to the **daylight**.

B. Contextual Clues related to Dasyu:

1. Anasa (Rv-5.29,10):

Mandala-5 Poet in the verse **Rv-5.29,10** has described **Dasyu** as *A-nasa* , It probably means **Nose-less** or Flat-nose character. Some linguists identify it as “**mouth-less**” (*an-asu*) entity. **Griffith** seems to be right in his interpretation; **A-nasa**/Nose-less/ **absence of a sharp or distinct** or proper shape nose as seen in **man**.

2. Krshna-twacha (Rv-9.41,3):

In **Mandala-9** verse **Rv-9.41,3**, the Composer has used *krishnamapa tvacam* phrase specifically to indicate colour of skin of **Dasyu**. Sanskrit word **Krshna** means black or dark and **Twacha** or *tvac* means skin. It practically means black or dark colour outer layer. Some experts call it as a dark-skinned person. **Griffith** has interpreted it as **black skin**, which is acceptable.

2. Distant Dwelling (Rv-1.63,4) :

Through the verse **Rv-1.63,4** the **Poet** has brought out distinct feature of **Dasyu** and that is **Distant Dwelling**. It practically mean a character that lives a far from the place of action, and covers a long distance to reach the location.

5. Ayasa-Pura (Rv-2.20,8):

In the verse **Rv-2.20,8**; the Composer has mentioned that the **Dasyus** live in the “**Ayasa-Pura/ Forts of Metal**” or the houses/places that are **as Strong as Metal**. Basically, Sanskrit word “**Ayasa**” means **metal** (a generic term and not a specific- **Iron** metal as used by **Griffith**), and the word “**Pura**” indicates a colony of the residents or a place where many live together.

Commonality between *Shyena Bird* and *Dasyu*

Two separate verses; **Rv-4.27,1** and **Rv-8.100,8** that belong two different classes of the **Rigvedic Mandalas** tell us a story of **Shyena** or **Suparna** (bird) who brings **Soma** from a long distance lives in “**Ayasa-Pura**” or the “**Forts of Metals**”. This is very similar to the description given in the verse **Rv-2.20,8** that informs us **Dasyu** also resides in **Ayasa-Pura** or the **metal-strong forts**. These three verses are from the hymns addressed to **Indra**.

Now coming back to main point of frequent hostile interactions between the Priests and their regular rivals the **Dasas** and the **Dasyus**; here the fundamental question is “**when did the Dasas and the Dasyus attack the Rigvedic People?**”

The probable answer to afore-mentioned question is, “during the **Yajna** ceremony”. This is because **Yajna** ritual is the pivotal activity often highlighted in the Rigvedic documents

around which the daily life of the Rigvedic Priests used to revolve. **Yajna** finds its place in the hymns of the **All Ten Mandalas of Rigved**.

As discussed elsewhere, at the time **Yajna**, in addition to **Soma** juice, several animals were sacrificed. Since an animal like goat or sheep or buffalo killed earlier cannot be offered to **Agni** in a single piece or in one go, then only possibility is, it would be cut into small pieces and then one by one several pieces of a killed animal would be submitted to the fire of **Yajna**. Hence for completion of the Animal sacrificial function, longer time was needed.

From the **contextual clues** discussed earlier, the Rigvedic term “**Dasa**” is an animal that looks very similar to a “**Dasa/Domesticated Dog**”, who lives in a group, **dwells in darkness**, has **bull-jaw** (strong jaw or facial look very similar to a Bull), and in whose community a **female (Stri Dasa)** plays a leading role. Based on the aforementioned features, a nocturnal wild animal “**Hyena**” which acts as a **scavenger** is the best suited candidate for the Rigvedic term “**Dasa**” who is treated as the enemy of the **Priests** involved in **Yajna**.

Similarly, from the **contextual clues** available in the Rigvedic literature, it can be said that a Rigvedic Character **Dasyu** who is **Nose-less/Anasa**, has **black colour skin/outer layer**, dwells in a mountain cliff (**a fort of metal**), daily covers a long distance during day time (**a distant dweller**), does not follow a set of rules (**a-vrata**), only knows eating without doing any **Karma** or actual work (**a-karma**) is nothing but a **Vulture** in reality, who used to attack **Yajna** site just to eat the remains of the animal being sacrificed during **Yajna** ceremony. The **Vultures** are described as the “Nature's sanitation workers who always look for a job and work hard to finish it fast without any hesitation”.

It seems that the Rigvedic Poets purposely gave these secret designations to wild animal **Hyena** and high flying bird **Vulture** just to hide their real identities. Probably Priests wanted to conceal their timid nature as they used to boast in front of others that **Yajna**/worship of the Deities would solve all the problems of the society. But in practice, while performing **Yajnas**, the **Dasas/Hyenas** and **Dasyus/Vultures** used to attack the sites, start eating animal flesh meant for sacrifice or the animal remains and the Priests could do nothing to them. As the generations of Poets wanted to keep these incidences as the **closely guarded family secret**, they deliberately used different terms so that things would remain among themselves.

Hence through the several composed verses, the **Yajna** Performers mostly requested **Indra** to do the needful to safeguard **Yajna** event that was mainly planned for **his** worship.

Now take the intense look at the four verses taken from the hymn **Rv-1.33** dedicated to **Indra**. In these verses the Poet specifically talks about **Indra** goes from **Earth**/land to **Heaven**/sky to kill **Dasyu** (**Griffith** translation is indicated by symbol- #).

Rv-1.33,4: *vadhīrhi dasyuṃ dhaninaṃ ghanenanekaścarannupaśākebhirindra |*
dhanoradhi viṣuṇak te vyāyannayajvanaḥ sanakāḥ pretimīyuh ||

Thou slewest with thy bolt the wealthy **Dasyu**, alone, yet going with thy helpers, Indra!
Far from the floor of heaven in all directions, the ancient riteless ones fled to destruction.

Rv-1.33,7: *avādaho diva ā dasyumuccā pra sunvataḥ stuvataḥ śamsamāvaḥ ||*
cakrāṇāsaḥ parīṇaṃ prthivyā hiraṇyena maṇinā śumbhamānāḥ |

Whether they weep or laugh, thou hast overthrown them, O Indra, on the sky's extremest limit.
The **Dasyu** thou hast burned from heaven, and welcomed the prayer of him who pours the juice and lauds thee.

Rv-1.33,9: *pari yadindra rodasī ubhe abubhojīrmahinā viśvataḥ sīm |*
amanyamānānabhi manyamānairnirbrahmabhiradhamo dasyumindra ||

As thou enjoyest heaven and earth, O Indra, on every side surrounded with thy greatness,
So thou with priests bast blown away the **Dasyu**, and those who worship not with those who worship.

Rv-1.33,10: *na ye divaḥ prthivyā antamāpurna māyābhirdhanadām paryabhūvan |*
yujaṃ vajraṃ vṛṣabhaścakra indro nirjyotiṣā tamaso ghā adukṣat ||

They who pervaded earth's extremest limit subdued not with their charms the Wealth-bestower:
Indra, the Bull, made his ally the thunder, and with its light milked cows from out the darkness.

Summing up the discussion on the topic of the **Dasas** and the **Dasyus** in the context of the “Aryans” of **Rigved**, the **contextual clues** present in the texts revealed that both characters are other than the human beings. The **Dasas** are the actual **Hyenas**, and the **Dasyus** are the real **Vultures** who used to attack **Yajna** to eat flesh of the killed animals.

Note: *On You Tube, there are many videos shot in African forests that show **Hyenas** and **Vultures** join together to eat carcass of wild animals like zebra, elephant, wild buffalo etc.*

XII. General Comments:

The main purpose of the present essay is to use “**Common Sense and General Awareness**” alongside the **Simple Logic** to understand the **important Rigvedic Features** from the perspective of a **common man**. Unlike the eminent academicians and theoreticians who strive hard to make the subject more difficult for the ordinary people as the latter do not have elementary knowledge of **Vedic** or **Classical Sanskrit**, here apart from the literal meaning of the archaic words, main stress has been given on the **Contexts** of the words/terms used and the **Contextual Clues** provided by the **Rigvedic Poets**. It is definitely a **non-academic exercise** and may be termed as **Spade-work** and **Home-work** of a **common man**.

(Please see **Appendix “A”** for topic- **Rigvedic Poems and Present-day Vedic Scholars**)

Here **Spade-work** means digging up or uncovering the **hymns of Rigved** to look for the information of historical and socio-cultural relevance hidden in them.

And **Home-work** stands for arranging the bits and pieces of information searched earlier and placing them in a proper order to draw meaningful inference or conclusion.

Summary of the topics discussed earlier is as given below.

- River **Saraswati** was the rain-fed river of the eastern part of **Rigvedic Territory**.
- On the bank of river **Saraswati**, the **Earliest Vedic Doctrine (Aditi and Seven Adityas)** was shaped but that was strongly opposed by the persons like **Brisaya** (see verse **Rv-6.61,3** that actually provides circumstantial evidence).
- At the time of Queen **Ila**, **Simple Agni Worship** was promoted in a big way.
- During the early part of king **Nahusha**’s regime, **Saraswati** used to flow from **mountain to ocean** as at that time, eastern area received sufficient rains throughout the year probably from South-west **monsoon** and **western disturbances** as well.
- Due to gradual reduction in rainfall or scanty rains in the eastern region, during the latter part of king **Nahusha**’s rule, river **Saraswati** stopped flowing freely throughout the year and became a seasonal river. It means, now **Saraswati** carried water in **her** bed for only for a few days that too during rainy season.
- After facing prolong drought like situation, the ancient **Rishis** first crafted a demon called **Vritra** and then real warrior God **Indra** to slay mythical character **Vritra**.

- Since birth, God **Indra** ran into trouble as the king **Nahusha** refused to accept **Indra** as the Supreme Deity of **Aryas** as **he** replaced earlier Prime Deity **Varuna**.
- This led to division in Vedic People, as king **Nahusha** forced the ancient **Rishis** to leave his kingdom who then decided to settle in the downstream part of river **Saraswati** (In **Mandala-2**, river **Saraswati** is the only river mentioned).
- Verse **Rv-10.75,5** confirms geographical location of river **Saraswati** to east of river **Sutudri** and west of river **Yamuna** (present-day **Haryana state**).
- In the downstream part of river **Saraswati**, **Yajna** was evolved from the wildfires. Many ancient Rishis belonging to different clans were actively involved in establishing proper **Yajna** Procedure that includes composition and collectively singing the Praise Songs, Soma Sacrifice, Animal Sacrifice etc.
- **True Horse (*Equus Caballus*)** arrived very late, after the Priests shifted to west of river **Sindhu**, most probably during the period of composition of **Mandala-1**.
- In true sense, at the time of **Five Early Mandalas**, all references of “**Asvas** used by the **People** to draw **Ratha/wagon/cart**” stand for **Race Quality Oxen/Bulls**.
- **Dasas** and **Dasyus** are **not** the names of human tribes but the scavengers who used come to the site of **Yajna** to eat animal remains that was being sacrificed. **Dasa** resembled a dog, actually nocturnal animal, **Hyena** and **Dasyu** was a bird, **Vulture**.
- The Poet of the hymn **Rv-1.164** deserves the praise, respect and admiration for a heroic attempt of composing a Poem that is totally different from the conventional Poems of **Rigved**, covering natural phenomena like real cause of rains, creation of seasons as well as days and nights; designating **Surya** as the **true God** of the world based on the fact that God **Surya** takes the whole world forward; mentioning seven meters used for the composition of Songs; and inserting a riddle of “**Two Birds**”.

XIII. References:

1. “**Rig Veda**”(Bilingual), Translated by Ralph T. H. Griffith (1896) in PDF (indicated by symbol-# in present essay).
2. “**Rig Veda**” (Griffith Translation)-Table of Content, Alphabetical frequency etc. from the Intratext Digital Library available on [www.Intratext .com](http://www.Intratext.com)
3. Monier-Williams Dictionary.
4. Images and General Information are sourced from the Internet/Public Domain, Books on Legends, Dictionaries, Handbooks, Encyclopaedia etc.

Appendix “A”

Rigvedic Poems and Present-day Vedic Scholars

Scholar, a very popular word used in the field of **Research** is defined as follows.

Scholar – a person who seriously studies a subject of his/her choice and achieves high degree of understanding, thoroughness as well as competence in it.

Although a person acquires status of a **Scholar** after years of hard work put in an area of his/her liking, still eminent experts often say that “**No scholarly work is perfect**”.

Many Vedic Scholars have frequently exhibited self-interest in narrating the Rigvedic stories through their articles or books. Some of them have often questioned wisdom of the Poets as the latter did not give full description in the composed poems about Material and Social culture prevailed at that time and also for having no writing skills (one scholar has termed them as “the **Illiterate persons of the Indian Sub-continent**” because of this drawback). This definitely shows moral degradation of the Scholars. Please remember that the **Songs of Praise** were composed much earlier to 1000 BCE, and despite knowing **Vedic Sanskrit**, in the twenty-first century, many of these persons still struggle to interpret the ancient Poems. Additionally, Scholars belonging to different fields do not have unanimity about the real identity of several Rigvedic characters, reasons for their creations or their presence in the texts, and have no clear idea about their functions/roles as well.

Some younger generation researchers mention the names of famous **Vedic Scholars** or **Indologists** to impress upon the reader that the information he/she has quoted, has come from the persons who have authority and expertise on the subject under discussion. They also include lengthy list of the references that is generally placed at the end of an article as if they have thoroughly understood all those papers/books. Then the reader starts believing that a statement made by a writer is based on rigorous literature survey and the research.

In other words, these Scholars first choose a topic found in the Rigvedic verse and then twist the content in favour of their line of thinking so as to tarnish the image of the Poet. In support of their views, they quote names of some famous writers but purposely ignore many points mentioned in the verses as they do not go with their pre-conceived notions. Thus many Rigvedic Experts try to make their arguments more convincing by providing only **half-truth** as common man does not have time and energy to cross-check the facts from texts.

For Example: “**Asva**” is the most commonly discussed word of **Rigved**. Scholars from different walks of life whether belong to **Indigenous Aryas School** or the advocates of **Aryans Migration Theory**; all of them invariably consider meaning of Rigvedic word “**Asva**” as the **True Horse (*Equus Caballus*)**. Most of the Vedic Experts pay serious attention to mythical features glorified by the Poets such as **Hari of Indra**, but do not bother to look at the **Rathas** of the Poet or king or **Bharatas** drawn by **Vrishabha** or **Bull**. Additionally, they are least interested in knowing the fact that “why the Composers have suffixed **Asva word** to other animals that are believed to pull the **Rathas of the Deities**”; e.g. **Aja/goat-asva**, **Hari/two tawny steeds-asva/Haresva**, **Prishati/spotted deer-asva** (this feature is not seen in case of animals drawing **Rathas** of the human beings). It means to say that majority of the Scholars prefer **myths** to **realities**.

It is often said that the “Scientific research should always be motivated by curiosity and tempered with objectivity”. But in reality, it is generally seen that Scholars have personal agenda before them and therefore, instead of seriously looking into **Rigvedic Hymns**, they focus their attention on **Avesta**, **Sintashta**, **BMAC**, and **Mitanni** Cultures. It means to say that even though they pretend to discuss the **Rigvedic features** in their articles, but some of them always give topmost priority to information found in other texts. For example: **Heraxvati** and **Hapta-Hendu** are the two terms found in **Young Avesta**; **only once**, but the **AMT Scholars** often consider them as the most credible evidence to justify their narration of **Avesta** is the **Oldest** among the ancient **Indo-Iranian Documents** and hence they treat several references of river **Saraswati** and **Sapta-Sindhu** phrase noticed in **Rigved** as secondary.

Matter does not end here, just to project Rigvedic Poets as the outsiders; some Researchers have sourced the origin of the ancestors of the Rigvedic Priests to the Eurasian Steppes. Their claim is mainly based on existence of many similarities in the spoken languages of Indian and European people but they are yet to submit conclusive archaeological evidence for their declaration.

Following **Rigvedic Features** are not found in any of ancient texts available in the world, but several established **Scholars** and **Indologists** often overlook them.

1. Stories of birth of Deities like Adityas from Aditi and Indra from mother Earth.

2. **Origin of Yajna from the wildfires and development of proper procedural part of Yajna ritual comprising of composition and singing of the Praise Songs in designated word format/meters (for history of Chhandas, see hymn Rv-10.130), Soma and Animal Sacrifice etc. due to contributions of several ancient Rishis including *Bharati* but that occurred after the fashioning of Indra.**
3. **“Who is the Creator of Heaven and Earth?” Mandala-4 Poet in the verse Rv-4.56,3 has attempted to answer the question, but the Mandala-10 Poet in the hymns Rv-10.81 and 82 has provided proper answer to said question by naming the creator of the Universal Parents of Rigvedic Deities as “Visvakarma”.**
4. **In the verse Rv-8.36 4; Indra is depicted as the originator of “Heaven and Earth”. Even though it is contradictory to established Rigvedic Doctrine, but it implies that there was an on-going intellectual debate or शास्त्रार्थ among the Priests on the issue of the shaper of both Deities.**
5. **The verse Rv-1.185,2 describes that “Heaven and Earth”; the Universal Parents of the Deities are motionless as they do not have feet, but their children/Deities move from place to place as they are born with the feet. Although it is fabulous point, still the content of the verse makes it clear that since inception of the Vedic Philosophy, “Heaven and Earth” are always considered to be stationary and the Poet has given reason for the same.**
6. **Hymn Rv-8.96 hints at the splitting of Priestly Community into two factions, one wanted to continue worshipping Indra as the Supreme Deity, and other group strongly opposed the God as on the west side of river Sindhu there was no paucity of water, hence there was no need to kill mythical demon “Vritra”.**
7. **Presence of “Pitre Asura” phrase in the hymn Rv-10.124 clearly signals that there were People belonging to *Other Tribe* who lived outside the Rigvedic Territory and also performed Yajna but their Supreme God was “Father Asura” and not Indra.**

It must be borne in mind that in the composed “**Poems of Praise**” the Rigvedic Poets lauded the “**Deities of their Imagination**” using best possible vocabulary known to them. If not all, many of the Deities are the **Forces of Nature**. But the real intention of the present-day Vedic scholars is to promote their own views and hence they give less stress on the “**Contents of the Hymns**”. As majority of the Vedic Experts work in a “**self-glorification mode**”, they keep questioning the Composers on the basis of missing material culture in the texts but do not want to spend time in identifying and then separating factual things present in the Poems from the fictional parts included in the Songs. That is why these Scholars do not pay much attention to the Rigvedic terms like “**Pavi-Ravi Kanya**”; “**Shata-himasi Ila**” etc. Sadly, many of them do not admire the exhaustive work done by these ancient Poets in the form of voluminous ancient Vocabulary provided to all of us, application of several **Poetic Devices** while composing songs, extensive use of the numbers (including **cardinal** and **ordinal numbers**), number of seasons in a yearly period (360 days, twelve months) etc.

Those who still doubt the calibre of the Rigvedic Poets, please read the following verse carefully.

Rv-10.94,6: दशावनिभ्यो दशकक्ष्येभ्यो दशयोक्तेभ्यो दशयोजनेभ्यः ।

दशाभीशुभ्यो अर्चताजरेभ्यो दश धुरो दश युक्तावहद्भ्यः ॥

daśāvanibhyo daśakakṣyebhyo daśayoktrebhyo daśayojanebhyah ।

daśābhīśubhyo arcatājarebhyo daśa dhuro daśa yuktāvahadbhyah ॥

Please focus attention on the use of word **Dasha/ten**. Also count number of times the words **tri** and **traya** that stand for number **three** or **thrice** appear in the hymn **Rv-1.34**.

Surprisingly, many Scholars regularly take all references of the word “**Asva**” present in Rigved as the “**True Horse**” despite the fact that in the hymn **Rv-1.20** the Poet has clearly stated that **Hari of Indra** and **Ratha of Asvins** are the **mental designs** of the **Ribhus**. Additionally, the Composer of the hymn **Rv-1.161** made it apparent that the **Ribhus** are the real creators of **Asvas** for other Deities as well (born out of “**Asva** from **Asva**” concept). It means, present-day Scholars still go by two hundred years old perception of word “**Asva**”.

Additionally, some Scholars believe that reference of “**Mrdhravach**” word in the verses **Rv-5.29,10** and **Rv-7.6,3** manifests the language spoken by the **Dasyus/Dasas**. But in the verse **Rv-7.18,13**; same term has also been used for **Purus**. Based on this similarity, could we say that the **Purus** and the **Dasyus/Dasas** or **Panis** shared a common language? In reality, the Poets have used “**Mrdhravach**” word to express reaction of a character in anger.

What more can we expect from such Scholars who have pre-conceived notions about various Rigvedic Characters?

Generally speaking, most of the genuine **Rigved Lovers** definitely understand that it is wrong to be prejudiced or biased against the persons having different views on the same subject, but in practice some of them use different types of “tricks of the trade” to dominate their opponents.

Present-day **AMT Scholars** must throw light on the following things as they always say that the **Aryans were the Intruders** in the **Indian Sub-continent**.

- **Presence of *Angra Mainyu*, the destructive spirit since beginning of Avesta and *Indra* as the insignificant demon in the Young or late Avesta only.**
- **Absence of *Gatha*, *Ara*/spoke, and *Pavamana* words in the Five Early Mandalas.**
- **Absence of reference of “Camel” in the Five Early Mandalas of Rigved.**
- **Absence of Vishnu, Brahmanaspati/Brihaspati, Maruts in entire Avesta.**
- **Presence of Indra as God in Mitanni inscription and not as villain like Avesta.**
- **Presence of Maruts word in Kassite texts.**
- **Unending faith of the generations of Rigvedic Priests in river Saraswati despite the fact that the river had gone dry well before the start of composition of Mandala-1 and 10 (see verses addressed to river Saraswati in the hymns Rv-1.3 and Rv-10.17).**

Rigvedic Poets have done their work earlier to 1000 BCE, hence it is meaningless to raise any question or pass adverse comment on the **Poems of Praise** as nobody is in a position to provide exact answer. Some Experts who know **Vedic Sanskrit** often say “**listen to us first**” as if they have been authorised to clarify any query about the texts. There is no point in beating around the bush while discussing shortcomings present in the texts like the language used or missing food or script or material culture as it would not serve any purpose but the Vedic Scholars must channelize their energy to bring out the intents of the Poets from the contents available in the verses/hymns. Thus, in an unbiased manner but with the clarity of vision,

Scholars need to come together and wholeheartedly work on a mission mode as a part of “Fact Finding Mission” and not as a “Fault Finding Mission”.

In short, Vedic scholars and Indologists must show willingness to explore, analyse and consider different points of view on various topics of Rigved.

A person, who claims to be a Vedic Scholar or Researcher should know how to distance himself/herself from the controversies but must express his/her, views with the facts and figures on the subject matter without taking any side. In the interest of **Rigved**, Vedic Scholars should avoid attacking each other so that all can come together when needed without any reservation.

In the **Five Late Mandalas of Rigved**; some verses belonging to different hymns actually reveal many important but untold ancient stories that are very much part of the **Early Phase of Vedic Philosophy** such as the purpose of creation of **New God Indra after appearance of Vritra in the Sapta-Sindhu region, Origin of Yajna** and its procedural development with the composition and singing of new **Poems of Praise; Soma and Animal Sacrifice**, the names of the members of **Ancient Royal Family** that was once headed by **Ila** and then led by her descendants like **Pururavasa, Nahusha, Yayati**, the **Five Tribes** etc.

Then the basic question here is;

“How did the new generations Poets, especially those involved in composition of the Five Late Mandalas know the past history of the Vedic People or the Aryas”?

Following verse addressed to **Indra-Agni** that belongs to the hymn of **Second to the Last Mandala (Mandala-1)** provides proper answer to afore-stated question.

Rv-1.139,9: Dadhyac of old, Anigiras, Priyamedha these, and Kanva, Atri, Manu knew my birth, yea, those of ancient days and Manu knew.

Their long line stretcheth to the Gods, our birth-connexions are with them.

To these, for their high station, I bow down with song, to Indra, Agni, bow with song.

Above verse makes it crystal clear that the Senior Poets of every generation but belonging to different clans systematically taught the **basics of Vedic Ideology** (including **Indra, Agni of Yajna and Saraswati**) to their descendants, who in turn orally transferred the knowledge gained from their forefathers to the next generation. In this way, the new generation Poets were fully aware of the past history of their People since ancient time.

But **Al-Beruni** a **Persian scholar** in his book *Tahqiq-i-Hind* or *Kitab ma li-l-Hind* has adversely commented on the earlier narratives. **Al-Beruni** (AD 973 to 1048), who was a part of **Mahmud of Gazani's** Indian expedition, spent a few years in the country, minutely studied and recorded scientific; philosophical and socio-cultural aspects of the People of India; has also made different observations on the behaviour of Priestly Community People of that time. One such observation is given below.

‘The Brahmins recite the Veda without understanding its meaning,’ writes Al-Beruni. ‘Only few of them learn its explanation, and still less is the number of those who master [it well enough] to hold a theological disputation.’ They don’t ‘allow the Veda to be committed to writing’ because it must be ‘recited according to certain modulations’.

(Sourced from: “*Al-Beruni’s India, 1030 CE*”, translated by **Edward C. Sachau**; pp-125).

It means to say that for more 2000 years, i.e. earlier to **1000 BCE** when **All Mandalas of Rigved** were compiled, till the **11th century AD** when **Al-Beruni** visited India, the **Brahmins** did not change their methodology but continued old tradition of oral transfer of the ancient knowledge within the family members. As pointed out by **Al-Beruni** now only difference was, most of them did it without understanding the true meanings of the verses/hymns. Therefore, it can be summarised as “**first by heart the Hymns of Rigved without applying mind and then reproduce the same in front of the pupils**”.

Considering above references as the factuality of that time, every Vedic Scholar has to be proud of **Sayanacharya/ सायणाचार्य**, the Sanskrit Scholar of the fourteen century AD for his thought provoking commentaries on **Rigved** and other ancient texts.

Unfortunately, present-day Research on **Rigved** has become a perfect example for the centuries’ old well-known story “**an Elephant (Rigved) and the Seven Blinds (Scholars from different fields)**”.

“The depth of thinking and the width of knowledge must increase with the length of research/study one conducts in a selected field”.

“My Heart beats for Rigvedic Poets”